THE FIRST ELECTION AT THE END OF THE WORLD By **Charles P. Pierce**

Esquire

NOVEMBER '19

KING OF
THE WILD THINGS

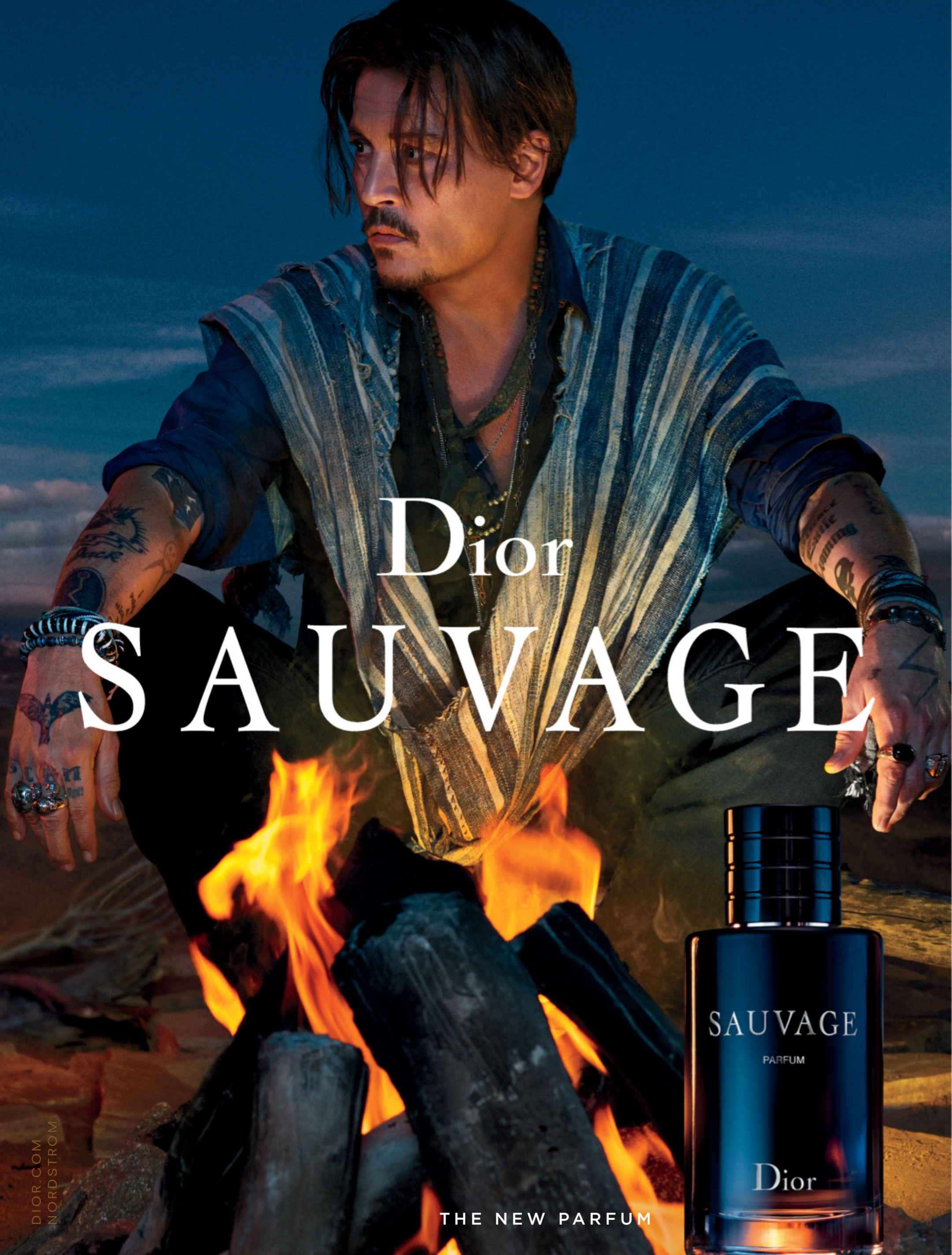
JASON MOMOA

has two dogs, seven Airstreams, and a climbing wall. But not this cat. Not yet.

By **Rachel Syme**

The ASTONISHING LIFE of Jeffrey Martinez

By **Tommy Orange**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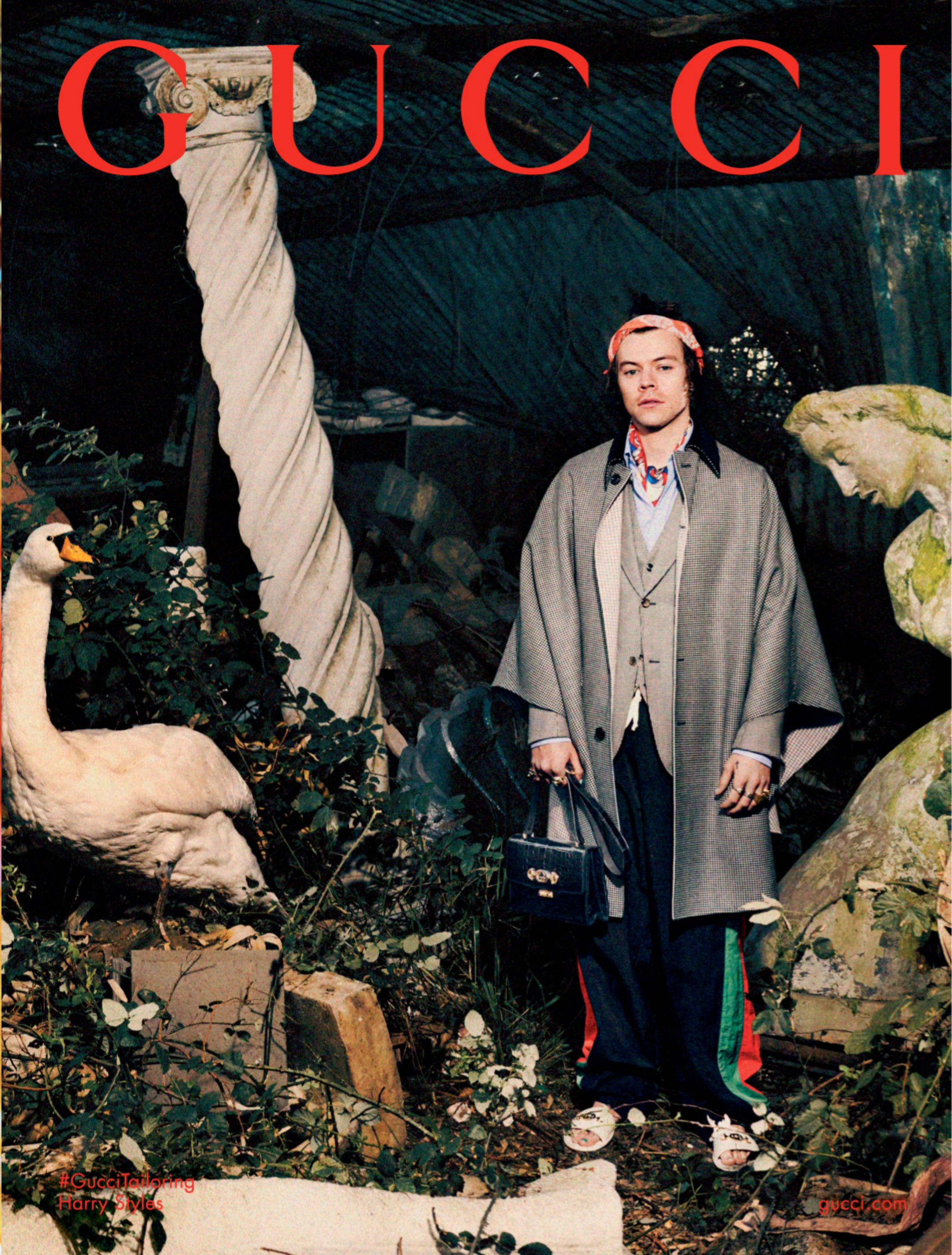
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AND BOURBON

➡Come bearing the gift of good booze for Thanksgiving dinner—or rather, for the post-dinner wind-down. Maker's Mark got creative this year with the first whiskey in its Wood Finishing Series, the Maker's Mark 2019 Release ($60). The intrigue is in the wood: The distiller introduced seasoned American oak staves to barrels of already matured bourbon to load it up with even more flavor, then bottled it at 108.2 proof. Your drinking companions will appreciate the familiarity of a Kentucky-bourbon favorite but take note of the baking spice and bright finish on the palate. So will you. —*Sarah Rense*

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DRAPED IN VELVET:
REQUIEM FOR AN UPDO

We learned a few things about Jason Momoa while making this issue. He's a damn good time, enjoys a doggo, and knows his way around a pint of Guinness. What we already knew—outside of his fluency in Dothraki—was that he loves himself a scrunchie. In fact, the scrunchie he'd been spotted wearing quite often became the inspiration for his custom Fendi suit at last year's Oscars. We lean in on page 62. —*Ben Boskovich*

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ON THE COVER

JASON MOMOA
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC RAY DAVIDSON
FOR ESQUIRE

Suit by Dior Men; scrunchie by Fendi; headband worn on wrist by Kūi Ke Kaila; vintage silver bracelet and silver skull ring by Book of Alchemy; stone rings by Red Rabbit Trading Co.; skull bone ring by Leroy's Wooden Tattoos. Production by Michelle Hynek at Crawford & Co. Casting by Randi Peck. Styling by Nick Sullivan. Grooming by Glenn Nutley at Opus Beauty using Number 4 Haircare.

photograph: **Eric Ray Davidson**

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Coat by **Dries Van Noten;** sweater by **Ted Baker London;** jeans by **Aspesi;** boots by **the Frye Company.**

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ALEXANDER SKARSGÅRD
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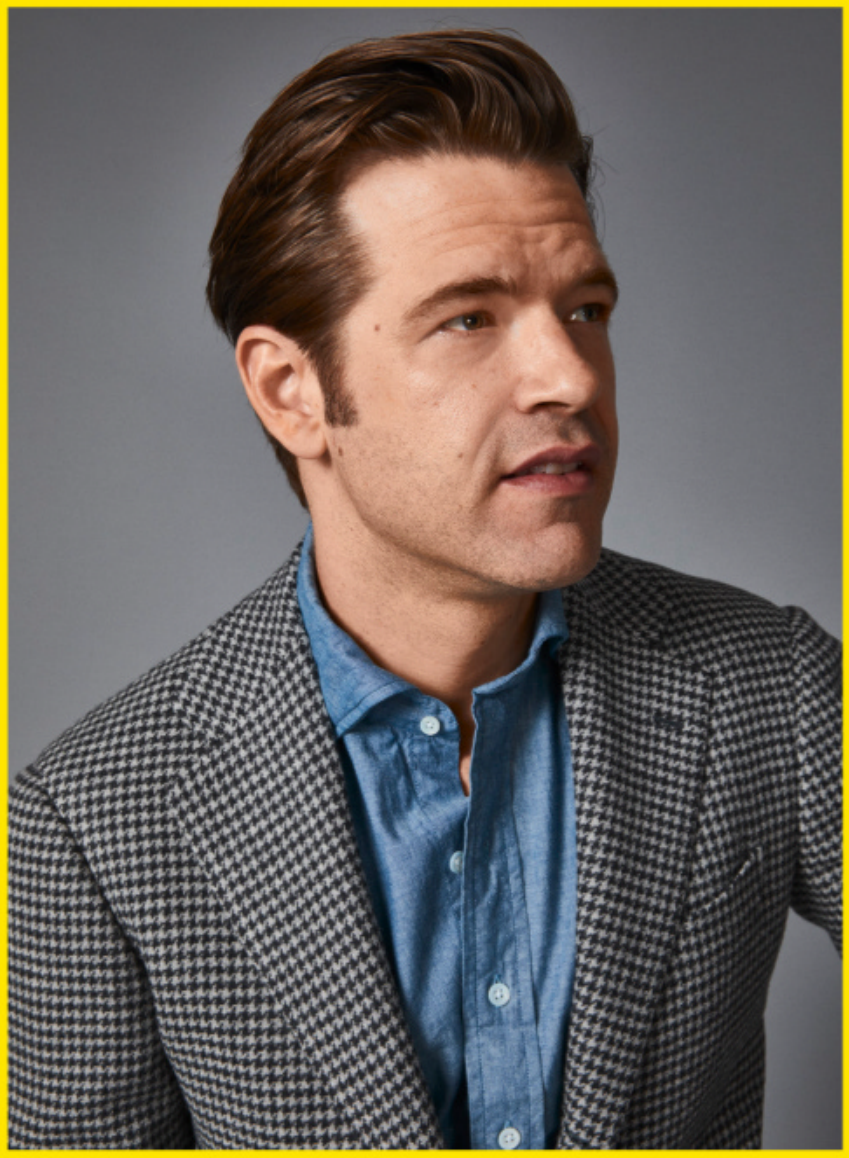

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

WHAT A TRIP

Most people love to travel. My wife and I are not those people. Not after kids.

Here's what traveling looks like with a four-year-old and a one-year-old: hauling them, their luggage, our luggage (which is somehow smaller than theirs), and ourselves into a cab and through an airport so we can distract them for several hours on the plane before trudging through another airport and into another cab so we can carry out the same parenting duties in a different city.

This past spring, however, my wife, Sally, and I went to Miami for four days on our first vacation without our daughters. The flight alone felt like a holiday. By the time we checked into our beachside hotel, we'd nearly forgotten we were parents. Turns out travel is amazing!

But the *act* of traveling—even when child-free—is a pain in the ass. It's not, as they say, about the journey, not when economy seating is involved. So we devoted the first ten pages of this issue to all the tips and tricks for how to look and feel your best when you're in transit purgatory, from the clothes to wear to the products to put on your face to the way to fold your blazer so it doesn't wrinkle. Plus, we let you in on an excellent hack to ensure solid rest on an airplane. I'll never look so sallow in Magic City again.

By the second day, my thoughts had turned to how I may not have many more opportunities to visit again, because Miami is sinking into the ocean. Though if you want to see firsthand how climate change is already bad and getting worse, you don't even need to go to the coasts, as longtime Esquire contributor and daily politics writer Charles P. Pierce demonstrates on page 92; you can go to Traverse City, Michigan, where lakeside beaches are disappearing, parking lots are underwater, and cherry trees are succumbing to fungus—all at least partly due to climate change. From this perch on northern Lake Michigan, Pierce argues that 2020 marks the first presidential election at the end of the world. In fact, for that matter, you don't even need to leave your living room: Starting this fall, you can watch Apple TV+'s *See,*

WHILE TRAVEL IS AMAZING, THE *ACT* OF TRAVELING CAN BE A PAIN IN THE ASS. IT'S NOT, AS THEY SAY, ABOUT THE JOURNEY, NOT WHEN ECONOMY SEATING IS INVOLVED.

starring this month's cover star, Jason Momoa, and set four hundred years in the future, when humankind has nearly wiped itself from the planet. Rachel Syme went to the set of the show, in Vancouver, to see how Momoa is enjoying the trappings of fame—while wrestling with his own place in the Hollywood hierarchy (page 62).

By day three, the coconut-oil sheen of Miami Beach left Sally and me wanting something a little more… cerebral. Inspiring, even. We could've used novelist Tommy Orange's profile (page 96) of an extraordinary Lakota teenager, born and raised in Oakland—just like Orange—who's breaking the cycle of pain the men in his family have suffered for generations. And we gladly would've taken Esquire editor Kevin Sintumuang's check-in (page 86) with Kiwi actor and filmmaker Taika Waititi, who directed that Thor movie everyone liked and whose hard-earned success is like the opposite of a cautionary tale. Or we could've taken inspiration for how to fund our next trip from the characters in David Hill's dispatch (page 72) from the Hoboken train station, where enterprising out-of-staters flock to take part in New Jersey's vibrant sports-betting culture.

By our fourth and final day in south Florida, we missed our daughters enough to come home. (That, and we had a return flight to catch.) Our joyful homecoming was the perfect ending to our kid-free getaway. After putting our daughters to bed that night, we immediately started planning our next trip. Disney World, probably.

—**Michael SEBASTIAN**

photograph: **Aaron Richter**

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SPECIAL Travel EDITION

ROLLING THUNDER

FPM's aluminum roller is tough as nails—and feels downright luxurious

Modern travel is an incredible privilege. It's also an incredible pain in the ass. Most of the elements that make it so painful—big lines, small seats, interminable delays—you can't do a damn thing about. But there are a couple crucial elements you can control, namely how you look and feel. Over the next ten pages, we'll show you how to be the best-dressed guy stranded on the tarmac, with a bag full of cleverly packed essentials that'll make the whole trip that much easier.

About that bag: It's the foundation of your whole travel vibe. It should work well, but it should also look great. And a little luxury goes a long way, too. FPM is a 73-year-old premium luggage brand that fuses two of Italy's greatest strengths—modern industrial design and artisanal chutzpah. Its heart and soul is its Bank collection, made from corrugated aluminum held together with hundreds of steel rivets. The robust design looks impregnable (hence the name), but there's serious luxury in the painstaking assembly, most of it by hand and finished with touches, like the handles, that nod to FPM's leather-making roots. **—Nick Sullivan**

Bank suitcase ($1,650) by **FPM.**

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

YOU *CAN* TAKE IT WITH YOU

And you should: a checklist of ONBOARD essentials

1. A **sunglasses case** is an often-overlooked essential. Always carry one, because there's nowhere else to put your glasses when you nod off. *By Vuarnet ($15).*

2. Keep your passport from getting all bent out of shape with a **passport holder.** You can also use it to store travel ephemera, like spare cash, boarding passes, etc. *By Thom Browne ($490).*

3. Bose makes the Cadillac of **noise-canceling headphones.** Unless you like engine noise, they're a must. *By Bose ($399).*

4. A **rubber watch band** will stand up to any travel mishap you can throw at it. *Watch and band by Victorinox Swiss Army ($1,150).*

5. Stick this **Bluetooth transmitter** into your seat's audio jack and go wire free. There's nothing like listening to a movie while you're waiting in line for the john. *By RHA ($50).*

6. Plug this **Roku** into your hotel's TV, connect to WiFi, and Netflix at will. *Streaming Stick+ by Roku ($60).*

7. Even in the age of Apple Pay, you always end up with pocketfuls of loose change when you're traveling. A **stylish pouch** will keep it all in one place (and keep you from jingling when you walk). *By Coach.*

8. If you've ever lost your headphones, you know how excruciating a flight without them can be. Always keep a **small, lightweight pair of earbuds** as a backup. This pair from RHA has a twelve-hour battery life. *By RHA ($250).*

9. Macallan 12 as a preflight drink? How fancy of you. It's important to treat yourself while traveling. *($9).*

—Adrienne Westenfeld

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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The best TRAVEL JACKETS combine storage, comfort, and luxury in equal measure. Don't leave the ground without one.

Best Made Co.

Roomy and rugged, with a western, workwear vibe and a blanket lining for extra warmth. *By **Best Made Co.** ($448); passport holder ($350) by **Mark Cross.***

Aspesi

The cult brand's version of the classic M-65 Army jacket. Anything tried and tested on the battlefield should suit air travel just fine. *By **Aspesi** ($938); sunglasses ($173) by **Ray-Ban.***

Drake's

This garment-dyed cotton chore jacket, available in multiple colors, sits in the sweet spot between casual and dressed up. *By **Drake's** ($535).*

Caruso

Italian maker Caruso is a brand to watch right now for its contemporary take on functional luxury. Here, it adds softness to the bush jacket. *By **Caruso** ($950); scarf by **Begg & Co.***

photographs: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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DOUBLE DOWN

Go ahead. Pack the extra shoes. Because sometimes it's just what the outfit ordered.

The sensible advice: Build all of your outfits around the one pair of shoes that you'll walk through security with—you've got TSA PreCheck, right? But on some trips, sensible just won't work. Sometimes you want to wear the things you really love when you're on the road. And at the end of the day, some variety in what you're wearing can be better than a double espresso for your jet lag. So instead of building an entire excursion's worth of outfits around one pair of shoes, go ahead and pack an extra. To maximize the space, stick your socks, belt, and even a rolled-up tie in there. The last step? Place your newly stuffed extra shoes in a lightweight, packable duffel. It'll double as an additional bag for whatever you pick up on your trip. More shoes, perhaps?

—Kevin Sintumuang

Suitcase ($700) by **Rimowa;** loafers ($228) by **Moral Code;** belt ($235) by **Anderson's;** socks ($35) by **Mr P.;** packing duffel ($69) by **Patagonia;** sweater ($248) by **Best Made Co.;** trousers ($338) by **Aspesi.**

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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PRADA RE-NYLON

THE PERFECT SECOND BAG

Prada reissues an eco-friendly version of its lightweight NYLON HAULERS

Picture this: You're racing through the airport and the leather messenger bag you just had to have is so heavy it's about to give you a hunchback. Suffering for fashion hurts even more when you're traveling. But there's a better way.

Decades ago, the Prada name was associated with a signature line of nylon bags. Now the fashion house is bringing them back in a more sustainable way. Available in several styles, the Re-Nylon collection is made of Econyl, a fabric created, in part, from depolymerized "ghost nets"—nylon fishing nets abandoned in the ocean. In addition to being eco-friendly, these featherweight bags are travel-friendly. They're simple and subtle, and they don't have that ubiquitous million-miler business-traveler vibe (even if you happen to be one). **—A. W.**

Jacket ($2,130), sweater ($840), trousers ($1,350), belt bag ($750), backpack ($1,750), duffel bag ($1,790), and tote bag ($1,550) by **Prada;** headphones ($399) by **Bose.**

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

ALWAYS PACK A BLAZER. ALWAYS.

It's not just for Bond. DRESSING SHARP should be an option on the road.

Toothbrush? Check. Phone charger? Check. Blazer? Definitely check. Why? Because even on casual trips, fate might bestow an invite to a fancyish party or a last-minute dinner reservation at a spot where, no, I'm sorry, you can't wear a denim vest here, sir. Yet packing a blazer presents a problem: How do you make certain it and everything else emerges from the suitcase looking as good as it did when it went in? With the right prep work, you can ensure you won't resemble a scrunchie on the other end of the journey.

1. Choose your blazer wisely. For our money, the Balloon jacket, from the Japanese cult brand Ring Jacket, is the best travel blazer around. Tailored yet unstructured, it's made of a high-twist wool that acts like a coiled spring, bouncing back after being compressed.

2. Get a dry-cleaner assist. Question: What's the best way to fold an oxford for a suitcase? Your dry cleaner knows. Drop off your shirts a week or so prior to departure and ask that they come back prefolded.

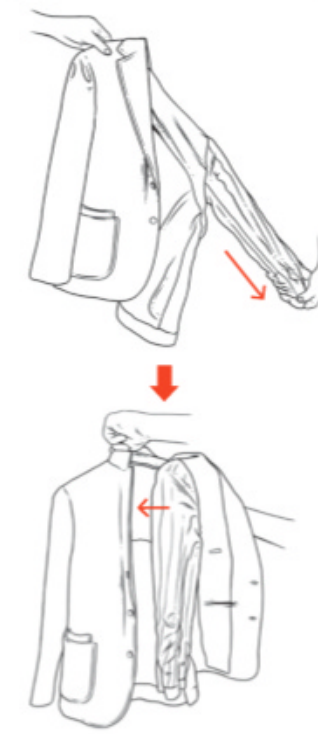
3. Unpack ASAP. When you get to the hotel room, don't raid the minibar. Instead, hang up your jackets and dress shirts. Then, yes, raid the minibar.

4. Forget the shower trick. Some people swear that hanging a wrinkled suit in the bathroom with a hot shower going will eliminate wrinkles. It doesn't. If you're desperate, it's time to track down a dry cleaner for a quick press. **—A. W.**

Suitcase ($2,060) by **Globe-Trotter;** jacket ($1,350) by **Ring Jacket;** shirt ($595) by **Brunello Cucinelli.**

KNOW HOW TO FOLD 'EM

• • • Folding a blazer is a lot like folding a fitted sheet—not as hard as you think, as long as you take the right steps.



Step 1
Turn the left sleeve and left half of the jacket inside out, then nest them inside the right shoulder.

Step 2
Pop the collar all around, smooth down the material, fold the jacket in half lengthwise, and then in half again. (An extra tip to avoid creasing and wrinkling is to place a plastic bag between the folds. This will allow the suit material to slide past itself rather than bunching up when it moves during transit.)

Step 3
Pack the jacket last in your suitcase and hang it up as soon as you arrive.

illustrations: Louise Pomeroy

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

LIGHTER-THAN-AIR TRAVEL

Pushing the luggage weight limit with your heavy lace-ups? Bring a pair of WHITE SNEAKERS.

Aside from that oversize gift for your nephew, shoes are the most obnoxious thing to pack for a trip. They don't exactly have a Lego-like fit in your bag, you're always debating which pairs you'll actually need, and, yeah, you have to throw a bag over them somehow. (Please tell me you do this.)

Let's cut down on one pretrip annoyance—or three, depending on the percentage of your shoe rack you tend to pack. It's a simple fix: Invest in a pair of lightweight, travel-friendly white sneakers. First off, they look good with practically everything. If it's the right pair, they'll work for you on and off duty—looking just as at-home with a suit as they do with jeans. They won't tip the scales—the shoes on the right are stacked from lightest to heaviest—so you don't need to worry about pushing the ever-shrinking luggage weight limit. And if you can bear working out in a hotel gym, you can wear them while you jog on its only functioning treadmill, too.

—Brady Langmann

RED-EYE-PROOF SOCKS

• • • There aren't too many socks that can easily handle air travel, but Paper Project's socks ($12) use a Japanese paper yarn that absorbs all the nasty stuff, keeping your feet fresh. Just don't use them as an excuse to take off your shoes midflight. *—B. L.*

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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Beanie ($200) by **Begg & Co.;** pillow ($350) and throw blanket ($1,500) by **Frette;** sweater ($535) by **Drake's;** headphones ($399) by **Bose.**

BEANIE MAN

The HAT you should pack year-round

I always travel with a beanie, even when I'm off to someplace balmy. Why? It's a lightweight solution for instant warmth on unpredictably cool nights, and it's an easy way to get cozy on a freezing plane. A bit of *hygge* in economy class. And if the flight attendants aren't handing out eye masks—i.e., you're not in biz class—you can just pull it over your eyes and catch a nap. The key is to wear a not-too-thick cashmere number that's ultra-soft and has a balance of warmth and breathability. Bonus: It hides bad hair days. **—K. S.**

THE CUBIST MOVEMENT

• • • I used to be packing-cube averse. Too dorky. Like Marie Kondo-ing but with no spiritual coolness. Then I tried them, and they're now sacred. Filling one cube at a time in the run-up to a trip makes packing less daunting, as does having things prepacked for a quick grab-and-go situation. It brings order to the chaos that is travel. So maybe they do have divine benefits. *Namaste.* —*N.S.*

STAY WIRED

Don't scramble to gather all your chargers before a trip. Have a second set and stow them in their own case. It'll save you from unpacking your carry-on just to find that iPhone cord, too. *Electronics organizer ($45) by* **Away.**

LIKE TETRIS FOR SOCKS

No more overpacking: If it fits in the cubes, it'll fit in the luggage. These make unpacking at the hotel super quick and keep family vacations organized—everyone gets their own set of cubes. *Packing cubes ($45 for set of four) by* **Away.**

AMENITIES, ALWAYS

Forget packing your medicine cabinet for each journey. Doubling up on your products and making a home for them is the only sane way to maintain your grooming routine on the road. *Dopp kit ($1,050) by* **Asprey.**

photographs: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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THE WORLD'S MOST INTERESTING CARRY-ON

Become a truly worldly man and the contents of your bag will reflect that. Here's what's in Facebook exec MATT JACOBSON's bag.

How many miles do I travel per year? It's enough that, honestly, I don't know. And it's enough that my everyday carry (EDC) has outgrown my pockets and is now a bag I bring everywhere, from lunch meetings to the plane. It's not for a lack of discipline. I'm a light packer. But as crazy as some of these things are, I feel a little better having what I need, and even some stuff I probably never will, always at hand.

SWISS SAFE COMPRESSION EMERGENCY BANDAGE

If I sever a limb, a Band-Aid won't help. I'd rather be prepared for catastrophe. Still, I hope I never need to use the emergency bandage that a Navy SEAL friend recommended I carry. *$18 for two; amazon.com*

PETZL ZIPKA HEADLAMP

Though this is de rigueur at the campsite, you'll look like a kook wearing the Petzl headlamp—until you're stuck in a staircase in a blackout, which has happened to me. *$30; petzl.com*

SUREFIRE E2D LED DEFENDER ULTRA

This torch makes finding all ephemera in the black hole of my bag possible and is bright enough to temporarily stun would-be muggers. I've used this feature and can say it works. *$199; surefire.com*

THE WINSTON 2 WALLET

I always want pen and paper handy, and I worked with my pal Mark Cho of the Armoury to develop what I think is the perfect wallet, which includes a small disposable ballpoint as well as an easily replaceable Moleskine notepad. I've had smaller versions with proprietary pen and paper, and I even have one with waterproof paper and a pencil for tropical climes, but the goal with the Winston Wallet was to have inexpensive and easily sourced inserts to make refills easy. *$615; thearmoury.com*

ACR RESQLINK PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACON

The ResQLink personal locator beacon relays your position to search-and-rescue teams. I also hope to never use this. *$290; acrartex.com*

VERTELLIS CHAPTERS JOURNAL

I journal daily and am a fan of the Vertellis Chapters guided journal to help organize my thoughts and intentions. My goal is the Japanese concept of *shokunin*—the way of the artisan. And I'm getting a little bit better every day. *$25; vertellis.com*

MICHAEL'S FAT BOY PEN

I swapped my Sailor fountain pen and traveling inkwell for an aluminum pen designed by Michael's Pens in Bremen, Indiana. It's beefy and smooth, and much more sane than traveling with a fountain pen and ink. *$250; michaelspens.com*

illustration: Louise Pomeroy

photograph: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

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YOUR IN-FLIGHT SKIN-CARE MANUAL

Flying can wreak havoc on your SKIN. But following this simple routine could mean the difference between showing up to your DESTINATION disheveled and arriving in style. ***By Garrett Munce***

PREFLIGHT

1 Drink Lots of Water

When the air is less humid, it "takes moisture from places that are more hydrated," like your body, says dermatologist Dendy Engelman. Buy a big bottle of water after passing through security and finish it by the time babies are preboarding.

2 Take Probiotics

Frequent fliers know that traveling can put your immune system through the ringer, so "boost your body's immunity to the bad bacteria," Engelman says. She recommends taking probiotics regularly.

3 Apply Sunscreen

"The ozone layer and the atmosphere are much thinner in elevation, and the glass doesn't filter out a lot of UV light," Engelman warns. The "super sun" above the clouds hits you even if you're sitting on the aisle, so put on sunscreen before you board (and reapply every few hours).

MIDAIR

1 Clean Your Area

Wiping down your surroundings (tray table, arm rests, the seat itself) starts your trip with a clean slate and will "keep your skin happier and healthier," says Engelman. "You touch things on the plane and transfer them to your face." Use an antimicrobial spray, such as Lumionskin Oxygen Mist with HOCL, that dries quickly.

2 Wipe Your Mug

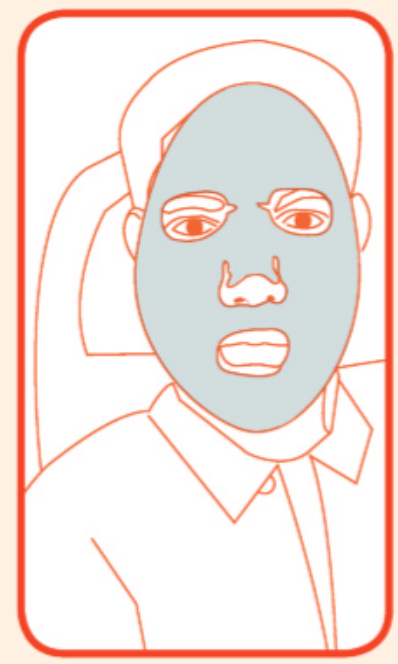
Don't use airplane bathroom water to wash your face (which you should do before putting anything on it). Stay in your seat and use individually wrapped facial cleansing cloths, like those from Oars & Alps, to clean your face sans H_2O.

3 Apply a Hydrating Mask

There's nothing wrong with using a sheet mask on a plane, but if that's too ostentatious for you, try a gel mask instead. Engelman recommends Derm Institute Anti-Oxidant Hydration Gel Masque. Rip open the pack and apply it as you would a moisturizer.

4 Get Misty

Face mists are so common that some airlines, like United, provide them in first class. But Engelman advises using them with caution. "You're putting



moisture on your skin, but then it's evaporating quickly and may be more dehydrating," she says. If you do use one, always lock it in by applying a moisturizer, such as Olay Mist Ultimate Hydration Essence, immediately after.

5 About That Moisturizer . . .

You should put one on whether you're misting or not. "Having a protective barrier on your skin not only keeps you hydrated," says Engelman, but it will also "prevent additional water loss to the low-humidity air." Follow the moisturizer with more sunscreen.

6 Don't Skip Lip Balm

There's a reason lip balms are always included in business-class amenities: "They know your lips are going to get dry," Engelman says. If you're not sitting in the fancy seats, bring your own and apply it liberally. We like Flight Mode Smooth Landing Lip Balm.

AFTER TOUCHDOWN

1 Wash Your Face ASAP

Many people notice breakouts after a flight, but it's not necessarily because planes are dirty. More likely it's due to the decrease in skin-barrier function or an increase in stress. Either way, wash your face as soon after deplaning as possible.

2 Deep-Clean When You Can

Use a purifying clay mask at your hotel to help deep-clean your pores. A weakened skin barrier can mean that dirt and bacteria have gotten stuck inside them. While postflight acne is not usually related to bacteria, it's better to be safe than sorry.

3 Bust Out the Antibacterial Big Guns

LED lights "are both anti-inflammatory and can kill bacteria on the skin," says Engelman. Use an LED mask to help rebalance your skin after the stress of flying. No space in your carry-on? Do it when you get home, or find a spa at your destination that can provide a zap.

4 Reduce Redness

"Some people get flushed after they fly," says Engelman. Using a calming anti-redness mask, like one from Skinfix, instead of the clay kind will help get rid of it quickly. They're especially good if you have to go right to a meeting. (Use it in the back of your Lyft.)

illustrations: **C.J. Robinson**

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SHOES

FOOTNOTES TO HISTORY

A new book looks at the most significant sneaker collaborations of all time—and the minds of the creatives behind them

To get a sense of just how much the sneaker-collaboration game has evolved in its 90-year history, consider this: One of the first collabs featured a badminton player. From Canada.

Today, the wildly creative partnerships between shoe companies and cultural icons—from Adidas and Pharrell to Converse and famed tattoo artist Dr. Woo—deliver not merely clean kicks but also cultural commentary rendered in rubber, leather, and canvas.

Elizabeth Semmelhack, who's worked in the storied collection at Toronto's Bata Shoe Museum for nearly two decades, breaks down the milestone moments in *Collab: Sneakers x Culture* (Rizzoli Electa), a study of more than 80 of the most significant sneaker collaborations to date.

Her mixtape approach includes much-hyped alliances—among them artist Tom Sachs's Mars Yard Nikes, designed for "the strongest minds in the aerospace industry"; Eminem's Jordan IVs, of which, rumor has it, only 50 pairs were made; and the Union Los Angeles's 2018 Air Jordan 1s shown here. They were designed to look as if they were (quite literally) stitched together from two different colorways, and they sneakily debuted at a flea market where more than a few shoppers declined to buy them, suspecting that they were fakes.

Why, apart from their sheer artistry, do collabs still fascinate us? "Some of it is 'cult of genius,' " says Semmelhack, "but other parts of men's dress simply aren't offered the opportunity to tell the kinds of stories that shoes do." —*Bill Shapiro*

DRINKS

NEW FIZZ ON THE BLOCK

There seems to be an endless torrent of spiked seltzers these days. So we enlisted the coolest sommelier we know to choose the best.

How do you choose a favorite spiked seltzer, an innocuously flavored low-carb beverage? "It's as hard as choosing the best dictator," says Victoria James, who in 2012, at the age of 21, became America's youngest sommelier and is now beverage director of Cote in New York City. "I grew up with white zinfandel and Zima," she admits. "No one's first taste of blues is like Grand Cru Burgundy." So in the meantime, there's always White Claw. We asked James to taste-test about three dozen flavors of spiked seltzers. Here are her favorites.

White Claw Natural Lime
In the world of spiked seltzer, Claw is king. And of the brand's six varieties, there was one clear winner. "Lime was the least intrusive," James says. "It has an almost Gatorade-like aftertaste. And that initial rubbery smell is nostalgic—like the ball pit at McDonald's."

Crook & Marker Tangerine
At first, coconut pineapple was the front-runner, only to be beaten out by tangerine. "It's an alternative to orange soda but a little healthier."

Wild Basin Melon Basil
Made by Oskar Blues, a brewery best known for some very stellar beers. "Most spiked seltzers taste like artificial fruit bombs, but this has a weird savory element, like peanut or sesame oil. This would be great with pad thai."

Truly Orange
"I love that Emergen-C smell, because I associate it with something that I drink after a hangover that will make me well."

Lifted Libations Grapefruit Vodka Soda
Okay, we're sort of cheating here. This isn't a spiked seltzer but rather a canned vodka soda. "This is better, as it's a pure distillate and soda and still only has 96 calories. It has a vodka aftertaste, but I almost prefer that, because it's the enemy you know."

Tray by Hermès.

photograph: Jeffrey Westbrook

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FOOD

CANCEL TURKEY DAY

At home, at least. And rediscover the joy of Thanksgiving…at a restaurant.

By Jeff Gordinier

Maybe you're looking forward to it.

Maybe when you hear the word *Thanksgiving*, your nostrils fill with the summoned scents of rosemary and sage, and you smile inwardly as you imagine bowls of cranberry sauce and boats of gravy and platters of poultry being ferried around the table from one generation to the next, with gentle elders and eager cherubim joining hands in a fellowship of food. Nostalgia for the most gluttonous of Thursdays is practically a national birthright, which means that complaining about our collective rite of homecoming is like committing an act of American heresy.

illustration: **C. J. Robinson**

So let's do just that.

Try as I might, I can't help but associate Thanksgiving with…work. It's work to cook so many dishes (Uncle Marty will throw a tantrum if he doesn't see his beloved creamed onions; Cousin Nancy won't show up if scalloped potatoes aren't on the menu), and it's work to scrub so many plates and bowls, just as it's work to haul the children through jammed airports and it's work tap-dancing through four days of conversation trying to pretend that Donald Trump doesn't exist. Sometimes I wonder whether Thanksgiving has less to do with expressing gratitude and more to do with enshrining some Puritan custom of making things way more arduous than they need to be.

If you happen to belong to my semi-clandestine band of Turkey Day refuseniks, I have a solution for you: Go to a restaurant for Thanksgiving dinner. Reserve a big table and take the whole family. Maybe you think there's something obscene about such a suggestion, considering Thanksgiving's deep connection to hearth and home, but (*pssst*) it's not as radical as it might initially appear. The first time I did it, I was feeling overwhelmed by the crunch of the holiday season, and weeks before my family members flew into town from California, I found myself wistfully Googling "New York restaurants that serve Thanksgiving."

Lo, such restaurants were manifold. I rashly made a reservation at Keens, a Manhattan chophouse that dates back to the days of Teddy Roosevelt. I told my mom not to worry, I hadn't joined a cult; this was just a one-off experiment with (*ahem*) *not working ourselves to death on what's supposed to be a holiday.*

AWAY GAME
The stuffing at Craft in New York, a longtime favorite place to spend Thanksgiving not at home.

And that night at Keens came as a revelation. The menu included all the classics—candied yams, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie with ginger cream—as well as shrimp cocktail and fat slabs of bacon. We feasted like wild dogs. Yet we got up from that table with an unexpected feeling of lightness. The airy sensation could be attributed to something simple: We didn't have to do anything. We didn't have to clean up. Our family conversation around the table that evening was marked by looseness. *We actually relaxed.*

Should you snicker that my sentiments here are somehow un-American, that it is our duty to suffer through the plate-juggling circus of Thanksgiving just because That's What You're Supposed to Do, keep in mind my primary realization during that dinner at Keens: The place was packed. It turns out there is a sizable secret society of turkey-loving patriots who happen to prefer a stress-free Thanksgiving. I still remember their uproarious laughter at Keens and that liberated gleam in their eyes. "Do you finally get it?" they seemed to be asking me with knowing nods. "Thanksgiving at home is for suckers."

TV

A *WATCHMEN* FOR OUR TIMES

Damon Lindelof's HBO adaptation of *Watchmen* might be the truest to the spirit of the original groundbreaking comic, and the most relevant show on TV right now *By Matt Miller*

VIGILANTE JUSTICE
Regina King as Angela Abar, a lead detective on a murder case.

Damon Lindelof was 13 years old when, in 1986, his dad gave him the first two issues of a new comic book called *Watchmen*. It was, Lindelof says now, like nothing he'd ever experienced. *Watchmen,* by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, shattered all expectations of comic books. It proved that the superhero genre could be as political, controversial, challenging, thought-provoking, and deeply human as any work of dramatic literature. The flawed, flesh-and-blood characters deal with ethical conundrums (who watches the Watchmen?) and anxieties (the threat of nuclear war). "What separates *Watchmen* from *Superman* or *Batman* or even *Spider-Man* is there's a depth of psychological pain," says Lindelof, a TV showrunner with *Lost* and *The Leftovers* on his résumé who's adapting a version of *Watchmen* for HBO. In setting

BY INVITATION ONLY

MONTEREY CAR WEEK

This August, Esquire, Harper's Bazaar and Road & Track teamed up with Alfa Romeo to celebrate Monterey Car Week 2019 at Folktale Winery in Carmel, CA. The event featured Neaopolitan pizzas and antipasti from renowned Chef Daniele Uditi of Pizzana, compliments of Esquire, and a Moda Italiana Trunk Show curated by Harper's Bazaar. Guests enjoyed test drives of the Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio and Stelvio Quadrifoglio through the Carmel Valley. Special thanks to Gozney™ for providing Roccbox pizza ovens.

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Esquire

Clockwise from top left: Folktale Winery Vineyard House; Jason Graham, Chef Daniele Uditi, Marisa Stutz, Kevin Sintumuang, Culture & Lifestyle Editor; Alfa Romeo 4C Spider; ShopBazaar pop-up shop; Chef Daniele Uditi; Event Guests

out to make his own series, he knew he had to do something entirely new—to evoke the feeling he experienced at 13. And that meant not worrying about whether he angered people.

Make no mistake, people will be angry. With its equal critiques of liberals and conservatives, *Watchmen* is shaping up to be the most controversial TV debut of the fall—and one of the most polarizing superhero stories ever told. That's in keeping with the spirit of the original text, according to Lindelof. "It's essentially saying we have disdain for people at the center, because they're not choosing a side, but we also have disdain for people who are in the extremes, because you can't live in the extremes. And so let's just take the piss out of everyone and ourselves in the process," he says.

For nearly 35 years, scholars and fans alike have debated the political and social nuances of *Watchmen,* which partly follows a sociopath with an inkblot mask named Rorschach, who is investigating the murder of a fellow vigilante in a time after masked heroes have been made illegal. Back when Lindelof first read the comic, he considered Rorschach the good guy, but now he believes "good guys and bad guys are not really even part of the vernacular here."

He mentions how in recent months Ted Cruz and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have each referenced Rorschach to defend points on opposite sides of the political spectrum. "There is a sliver of the Venn diagram where Ted Cruz and AOC basically both have their arms linked in excitement, and that sliver is called Rorschach," Lindelof says. "You look at him, and you describe what you see in the inkblots. But that's a reflection of your own personality, or your own psychological profile, or, more specifically, your own trauma."

***Watchmen* proved that the superhero genre could be as political, controversial, challenging, thought-provoking, and deeply human as any work of dramatic literature.**

In his adaptation—which is not a strict sequel but more of an expansion of the *Watchmen* universe almost four decades later—Robert Redford has been president for about 20 years and the Supreme Court is stacked with Left-leaning judges. And yet, even in a liberal-controlled country, bigotry remains: A white-supremacist group known as the 7th Kalvary has co-opted the idea of Rorschach. Whereas nuclear war was the root of all evil in the comic, the HBO series positions racism as the greatest evil—one that reaches back many generations before the invention of atomic weapons.

"In order for this to be *Watchmen,* we have to start with an unsolvable problem, a problem that the most well-intentioned superheroes and vigilantes actually cannot solve," Lindelof says. "And now we're in 2019 instead of the '80s, where it feels like you can't tell a story about America in any kind of real, historical context that doesn't talk about race."

Like the original *Watchmen,* Lindelof's interpretation operates with a subversive attitude that says no side is right and there are no simple answers—which isn't an easy balance to achieve in an era when *bothsiderism* is a bad word. Lindelof says he does this "very carefully and wildly irresponsibly at the same time. You can't be afraid to make a mess." But, he adds, he put together a writers room with people of color and of differing perspectives who were equipped to dig into a story about race and politics.

The cast is also predominantly people of color. Oscar-, Golden Globe-, and Emmy-winning actress Regina King stars as the lead masked vigilante, who is—like Rorschach before her—trying to solve a gruesome murder.

Complex sci-fi and fantasy stories are exactly what Lindelof does best. Along with J. J. Abrams and Jeffrey Lieber, he cocreated the groundbreaking ABC drama *Lost,* which took massive risks for a network television show, with fearless narrative twists. More recently, his three-season HBO drama *The Leftovers* was a masterpiece of fantastical surrealism—a twisting journey into our collective subconscious (that somehow incorporated the '80s classic "Take on Me" to perfect effect).

"I don't want to be an imitator," he says, referring to his latest project. "I don't want it to feel like it's some simulacrum of *Watchmen.* I want it to feel like it's pulsing with that same kind of energy that made the original work. That's the sweet spot."

But yeah, it's going to piss people off. Any time Ted Cruz and AOC agree, you know things are getting ugly.

BUILDING CHARACTER
Lindelof and King on the set of "Watchmen." Above right: Rorschach in the original comic.

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BOOKS

GARRY SHANDLING'S ADVICE TO HIS 16-YEAR-OLD SELF

Judd Apatow's book on his late mentor, *It's Garry Shandling's Book*, features a newly discovered letter brimming with Shandling's signature wit and generosity of spirit. In it, the comedian breaks down the dos and don'ts he'll need for his own future.

1) Acne goes away. It's perhaps the biggest advantage to growing older. But then your hair thins, but don't think about that now.

2) Time doesn't actually exist. However, in this impermanent world, the illusion that time is passing is a sign that points to what some physicists call this relative world. You do not exist in as I write this. Nor do I, at this age, in your world. But, on another plane we are one, happening simultaneously.

[Letter skips **#3** and **#4.**]

5) Grow-up

6) I want to assure you that you are enough. Don't doubt this. You are just as God intended.

7) Learn to meditate

8) I will always be there to guide and give you advice.

9) Stop masturbating

ON THE ROAD
Above: Shandling onstage. Left: With his mother, Muriel, at Lake Cachuma in Santa Barbara, 1975.

10) One day you will not have to wear glasses, there is a surgery that can fix your eyes. I know how bad yours are. The doctor may have to go in thru the back.

11) Be just who you are

12) Know the world is impermanent, and is in constant movement. Nothing, by nature, is ever exactly the same the next time

13) Punch a couple of kids at school. I can't recall their names now, but you know who I'm talking about.

14) Please don't wait till you're 22 to move out of the house away from home. I'm still choking suffocated by it

15) iPod, DVD, HD, Bluetooth. No these aren't diseases. Or are they?

16) You think your ham radio set is fancy technology. Just wait.

Excerpted from "It's Garry Shandling's Book," edited and with an introduction by Judd Apatow. On sale November 12, 2019.
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JV190409-16

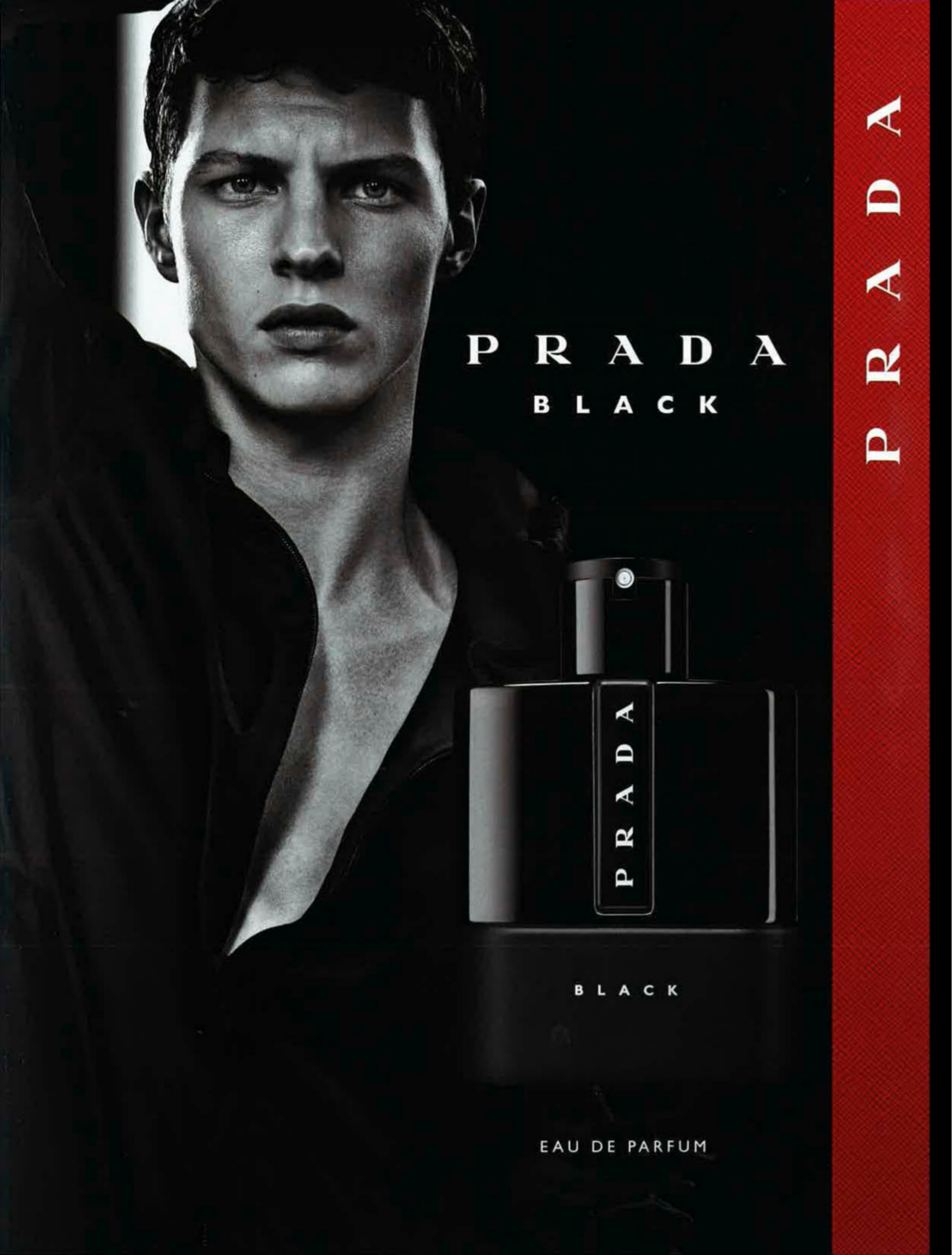
DESTINATIONS

GREAT SCOTTSDALE!

The desert city is blooming with indulgent spas, awe-inspiring nature, and eye-popping architecture. But that's just the beginning. *By Candice Rainey*

BING SLEPT HERE
After opening in 1956, Hotel Valley Ho played host to Hollywood icons like Bing Crosby and Zsa Zsa Gabor.

It's not the sheer concentration of luxury spa hotels that makes Scottsdale seem so damn restorative. As soon as you land in this palm-filled northeast corner of the greater Phoenix area, you're surrounded by hundred-year-old saguaros touching a cloudless, seemingly endless sky and rock formations that radiate a pre-civilization vibe. But you're also not so "away from it all" that you can't take it in from a jewel-colored pool with a blindingly good margarita in hand. For the Patagonia fanny-pack crowd, Scottsdale is an easy getaway where you can hike among the chollas as well as drink excellent cocktails, devour taco platters, and soak up life-affirming architecture in perpetual sunshine. And with a new wave of hotel and restaurant openings, the city has lost the country-club stiffness and gained a more southwestern-inflected midcentury feel.


PRADA
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EAU DE PARFUM

LIFT HERE

LUNA ROSSA

CARBON

BLACK

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EAU DE TOILETTE

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LIFT HERE

DESERT MODERN
Clockwise from left: Taliesin West; Taco Chelo; Camelback Mountain.

Where to Stay

The Andaz Scottsdale Resort & Bungalows is the perfect tune-everything-out compound, with its grown-up pool and midcentury-style residences. But if it's the cool-kid crowd you're after, head to the Scott Resort & Spa, which just underwent a massive $15 million renovation; its lobby bar, one of the slickest in town, serves up frosty, Havana-inspired cocktails. We also love the refurbished Hotel Valley Ho, a stylish homage to its modernist architect, Edward L. Varney, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright's who designed the celeb hangout in 1956. It stays true to the era through its Knoll chairs and bold-colored B&B Italia sofas.

How to Commune with Nature

No matter where you rest your head, you'll need to get up early to climb Camelback Mountain before the Arizona sun immolates you. Take a predawn Uber (parking is a nightmare) and expect to reach the summit after 1.2 to 1.5 miles—at that point, you'll be met with uninterrupted views of Tonto National Forest.

If you're craving wide-open space, take a day trip to McDowell Sonoran Preserve, which has more than 30,500 acres of trippy desert landscape filled with boulders the size of Jeeps and multiarmed cacti. The mountain-biking trails here are some of the best in the West, and AZ Mountain Biking specializes in guided tours for all skill levels, from beginner to spoke-head.

Where to Eat and Drink After Hiking/Biking Your Butt Off

For lunch, visit Taco Chelo. While designing this unnervingly cool taqueria, artist and restaurant co-owner Gennaro Garcia channeled Mexican architect Luis Barragán's house. Eat as many carne asada tacos as you like (don't forget, you just climbed mountains in the desert) and drink from the margarita machine. Once it's time for dinner, know that Pizzeria Bianco is considered one of the best Neapolitan pie joints in the country. (Chef Chris Bianco hails from the Bronx.) Looking to satisfy more of a southwestern craving? Try Chelsea's Kitchen, a reimagined roadhouse with cocktails and chili burgers in an adobe-brick building. Whatever you do, at some point have a nightcap on the patio at the 90-year-old Biltmore hotel, renowned for its massive fire pits and uniformed waiters delivering room service on bikes. No judgment if you just want to grab a bottle at Sauvage Bottle Shop, a natural-wine store, and take it back to your room—especially if you have your own private fire pit.

As soon as you land in Scottsdale, you're surrounded by saguaros touching a cloudless sky and rock formations that radiate a pre-civilization vibe.

Where to Get Your Culture Fix

When you've had enough pool time (is that a thing?) and your quads can't take any more adventuring, scope out some serious architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright designed and built his winter home, Taliesin West, in Scottsdale in 1937. "[It's] a look over the rim of the world," he once said about the landmark. It also houses an architecture school and offers guided tours to midcentury and desert-modernist acolytes. Make a reservation if you want to see all that natural light stream into Wright's living room, drafting studio, music pavilion, and garden room, where majorly sophisticated furniture (including those famous origami chairs) will have you foaming at the mouth.

For a day trip full of really out-there stuff (this is the desert, after all), travel about an hour north to Arconsanti, a proto eco-city dreamed up by Italian architect Paolo Soleri in the '60s. The project explores how architecture can play a role in environmental stewardship. Think bell chimes, domed ceilings, concrete-meets-desert-fauna, and a café (see: tacos for lunch, again).

△ NEW BR 05 COLLECTION Automatic ⌀ 40mm ♦ 100m water-resistant bellross.com

TIME INSTRUMENTS
FOR URBAN EXPLORERS

Bell & Ross

The 2019 Esquire GROOMING AWARDS

Every year, there are more new must-use ingredients and technological advancements than could ever fit in your medicine cabinet. We spent months trying them so you don't have to. Here are twenty-nine of the best products for every grooming concern, with some you didn't know you needed. (Trust us: You do.) ***For a complete list, head to Esquire.com/GroomingAwards.***

photographs: **Jeffrey Westbrook**

Clean

1.
NATURELAB PERFECT SHINE CONDITIONER
It's a conditioner lightweight enough to use every day on fine hair but hydrating enough to keep the frizziest among us smooth and soft. It makes your hair news-anchor shiny without the bright lights. *$14*

2.
LIVING PROOF LEAVE-IN CONDITIONER
Anyone with curly or textured hair knows moisture is the name of the game. Using a dime-sized amount of this after a shower keeps hair from getting out of control. *$26*

3.
SCHICK XTREME 3 PIVOT BALL RAZOR
The flexibility of this razor makes shaving your face easy and quick, but it really excels when you use it on all the other parts of your body, like your head and anywhere else you manscape. *$8 for three*

4.
AESOP GENTLE FACIAL CLEANSING MILK
Nonfoaming cleansers don't dry out your skin the way lathery ones can. This gentle milk gets rid of dirt and oil efficiently without irritating even the most sensitive skin. *$53*

5.
ORIBE SERENE SCALP EXFOLIATING SCRUB
A healthy scalp could mean less hair loss. This one's thin nozzle gets right down to your scalp easily, and soft polymer granules help eliminate built-up product and dead skin cells. *$52*

6.
SKINFIX GLYCOLIC RENEWING SCRUB
The same idea as an exfoliator for your face, but for the rest of your body. It helps rid your skin of body acne and ingrown hairs and leaves it moisturized and smooth. *$30*

7.
OLD SPICE MOISTURIZE WITH SHEA BUTTER BODY WASH
The shea butter in this formula leaves your body feeling smooth and hydrated, not tight and dry like others do. Its smell is less locker room and more fancy hotel room. *$5.50*

8.
BAXTER CLAY MASK AHA
Swap out your face scrub for this exfoliating mask. The alpha hydroxy acids gently break the bonds between dead skin cells, so they go down the drain without your needing to lift a finger. *$24*

9.
GILLETTE PURE SHAVE GEL
Specially formulated for sensitive skin, this alcohol-free shave gel protects your skin from the razor's drag and contains aloe vera to keep redness away for hours after you're done. *$6*

10.
BYRD PURIFYING SHAMPOO
Sure, it cleans, but it also contains aloe vera to moisturize and sea salt for natural volume. Use it for just-off-the-beach texture even if you're coming from the gym. *$20*

PROMOTION

Esquire

MEN'S JEWELRY

EXCLUSIVELY AT

macy's

Prep

1.
AMERICAN CREW FIBER GROOMING FOAM
Using heavy creams and pomades on thinning hair makes things worse, which is why this foam is the perfect styler if you want both volume and hold. *$18*

2.
DOVE MEN+CARE CLEAN COMFORT DEODORANT
This deodorant doesn't use cloying, aggressive fragrance to mask odor. It manages to neutralize it without alcohol, so your pits smell fresh with no irritation. *$5*

3.
GILLETTE HEATED RAZOR
It's the closest you will ever get to a barbershop shave in your own bathroom. This ingenious razor uses gentle heat to soften hairs for an incredibly close shave without the discomfort. *$200*

4.
THE ART OF SHAVING OLIBANUM + PEPPER SHAVING CREAM
It comes out of the jar already rich and lathered, but what we love about this cream is the subtle, rich scent. It smells like a fancy spa but won't overpower your cologne. *$30*

5.
LA PRAIRIE SKIN CAVIAR EYE LIFT
It'll be worth every penny of its high price tag when you realize this eye cream is able to erase the look of all those late nights with just a few uses. *$480*

6.
TOM FORD RESEARCH SERUM CONCENTRATE
It's the Tom Ford effect for your medicine cabinet. This serum immediately brightens your skin, but it also helps it stay healthy and look younger with consistent use. *$350*

7.
CREST 3D WHITE CHARCOAL TOOTHPASTE
The charcoal in this toothpaste is added value, not the main event. It doesn't compromise any whitening power or leave your sink looking like an oil spill. *$7*

8.
SUPERGOOP! SUPERSCREEN DAILY MOISTURIZER SPF 40 PA+++
If you're not wearing sunscreen every day, start now. This daily moisturizer has a higher SPF than others, but you don't feel like you're spreading glue on your face. *$38*

9.
FELLOW MINERAL SPRAY
Salt sprays are ideal for giving fine hair volume without weighing it down (and for making all hair look cool and casual). This one includes algae so that your hair never feels crispy. *$28*

10.
SEB MAN THE GROOM HAIR & BEARD OIL
Packed with hydrating oils like jojoba and argan, this multipurpose grooming oil keeps your scraggly beard hairs in check and gives the hair on your head shine without shellac. *$20*

11.
HARRY'S TEXTURIZING PUTTY
Somewhere between a pomade and a clay, this all-around stellar styler makes you look like you just woke up with a head of great hair, not like you loaded it up with product. *$12*

12.
TATA HARPER HYALURONIC GEL MOISTURIZER
This lightweight gel moisturizer uses natural ingredients like chia-seed water and hyaluronic acid to keep skin fully hydrated. It won't feel heavy on your skin and even helps control oil and cut shine. *$116*

STYLE AGENDA

THE PRESAGE ARITA PORCELAIN DIAL. A NEW EXPRESSION OF THE ARTISTRY OF JAPAN

The heritage of Arita porcelain is reflected in the color of the dials, white with a trace of blue, which was the color of the earliest Arita porcelain. The dials, which are made in Arita itself, have the rich texture and depth which is the signature of all the finest porcelain. The new Presage porcelain dials are made by an experienced manufacturer in Arita that has been making porcelain since 1830.

seikowatchesusa.com, SPB093, SPB095

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We age, we blend, we age again. This unconventional practice creates a remarkably smooth whisky – known the world over for its indulgent honey and toffee flavours.

Dewar's 15 – A drop of gold from barrel to bottle.

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ESQUIRE MEN'S JEWELRY: THE GIFT OF STYLE

With a line of expertly crafted pieces, the Esquire Men's Jewelry collection encompasses the right blend of classic and contemporary, in a broad range of styles and materials perfect for every holiday look.

Save now at www.Macys.com/EsquireJewelry

Polish

1.
LULULEMON NO-SHOW DRY SHAMPOO
Dry shampoo is a lifesaver when you don't have time to shower or just need to freshen up a little. Now the maker of your favorite workout gear makes your favorite postworkout essentials. *$34*

2.
BOTTEGA VENETA ILLUSIONE EAU DE TOILETTE
Need to brush up on your Italian cinema? This cologne is like a Bertolucci movie you can wear: bright, virile, and definitely sexy, with something roiling just beneath the surface. *$117*

3.
DIOR SAUVAGE PARFUM
The new version of the classic cologne keeps all the best notes (wood, leather, smoke) but adds more fresh botanicals (cardamom, bergamot, mandarin) for an unexpected edge. *$120*

4.
BRANDLESS HAND CREAM
When it comes to hand cream, you want one you'll actually use, not always the most expensive. Case in point: this no-frills cream that keeps your hands soft but your wallet full. *$6*

5.
DR. BARBARA STURM HYDRATING FACE MIST
If you have dry skin, or skin at all, you need to be conscious of losing hydration throughout the day. Instead of slathering on more creams, spray some face mist and feel your face relax. *$95*

6.
D.S. & DURGA D.S. EAU DE PARFUM
Can't afford a trip to India? This is the next best thing. Spicy florals and smoky sandalwood in this cologne immediately give you back-from-the-ashram vibes, no meditation required. *$350*

7.
ARMANI CODE ABSOLU PARFUM
Unexpected and cozy notes like suede, vanilla, and tonka bean make this cologne sensitive and masculine in a modern way, like reciting poetry while driving a Maserati. *$92*

Tray ($48) by **Jonathan Adler.**

SOME GIFTS ARE TIMELESS

EVERYONE KNOWS SOMEONE WHO DESERVES AN EXCEPTIONAL WRISTWATCH

For decades, buying a pre-owned timepiece meant perusing pawn shops, weeding through dubious web domains, or paying a premium at auction. Then retailers like Crown & Caliber showed us a better way: verified-authentic, modern-classic watches from top brands including OMEGA, Breitling, Panerai, Cartier, and TAG Heuer, all offered online and under warranty. They've made it easier than ever to give the gift of a fine timepiece. The challenge now isn't so much finding the right watch, but deciding which person should receive it. Need some suggestions? Here are a few potential candidates.

THE NEW GRADUATE

▲ TAG Heuer Carrera 1964 Re-Edition CS3110

A fine timepiece is the perfect way to commemorate the early accomplishments of a man's formative years. Not only as a symbolic gesture, but a practical one. Consider gifting a dress watch on a classic leather strap something understated and pedigreed, which can be worn in professional environments, from internships to job interviews, and during formal events. It'll help give that new grad the polish (and added confidence) to start chasing the career they've always wanted.

THE NEXT GENERATION

▲ Patek Philippe Annual Calendar 5396R-001

The arrival of a child is as memorable as moments get. It's the perfect time to celebrate the present, while also turning an eye toward the future. Give the new father (or mother) a timepiece that speaks to the values they'll want handed down, and have the caseback engraved with a special message. They can stash the watch away for safe-keeping or wear it around to develop a nice patina for posterity. Either way, it'll make a lasting impression and kick off an important tradition within a growing family.

THE TRUSTED PARTNER

▲ Breitling Colt A17388

Maybe it's a spouse. Maybe it's a mentor, an apprentice, or just a close friend. Each year brings an opportunity to give that important person a keepsake on their birthday. Here, think about what the relationship means to you: Is it durable, like a steel or titanium case-and-bracelet combination? Adventurous, like a sporty pilot watch, or elegant in its simplicity, like a smart two-hand design? No matter what you decide, odds are Crown & Caliber's expansive inventory has a watch to fit the bill.

THE MAN IN THE MIRROR

▲ Audemars Piguet Royal Oak 26320OR.OO.1220OR.01

Yes, you. Did you struggle and succeed, start fresh and finish strong, or climb the ladder and retire on top? Mark the occasion by dipping a toe into watch collecting or adding a fresh piece to your current rotation. Get something from a watchmaker you've always admired (Crown & Caliber carries dozens of Swiss heritage brands) that reflects your sensibilities and personal style (special-editions, unique case shapes, and next-level complications are all on offer). Go crazy. After all, self-gifting is still gifting, and this one's just for you.

Photos by Jonathan McWhorter

TO LEARN MORE VISIT: **CROWNANDCALIBER.COM/TIMELESS**

CROWN & CALIBER

JASON MOMOA IS MAKING THE ABSOLUTE MOST OF HIS NEWFOUND FAME. WOULDN'T YOU?

THE GUINNESS-GUZZLING, MOTORCYCLE-COLLECTING, BUSINESS-LAUNCHING WANDERER

BY RACHEL SYME

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC RAY DAVIDSON

JASON MOMOA DID not *steal* the dog. He wants to make that absolutely clear. He's just borrowing him for a little while. Sure, yesterday he walked off the set of his new Apple TV+ show, *See,* with the slobbery German shepherd puppy who plays one of a scrappy pack, and sure, he brought the puppy back to his Vancouver hotel suite to cuddle with him in bed for eight hours, and sure, he immediately renamed him Rama, which was the name of a dog once belonging to his wife, Lisa Bonet, but this is all just a *temporary* arrangement.

That is, unless his wife says he can keep him. (The nostalgic name was no accident, you see.) Bonet, whom Momoa has been with for fourteen years and officially married in 2017, rules the roost. What she says goes. This is why, he tells me as we sit under an umbrella on the patio of his room at L'Hermitage on a recent sunny August afternoon, drinking tallboys of ice-cold Guinness, Bonet's section of their house in Topanga, on a sprawling five-acre ranch where she does yoga, is the nice part, while his man cave (yes, he uses the term "man cave" *a lot,* as in "I feel like Tom Waits and Neil Young might stay the night in my man cave") is . . . the less nice part. "Goddesses belong up there," he says, holding one hand high above his head. Then, lowering it to the ground: "Dirtbags down here." He has to be delicate about how he plays this. He already has two dogs at home—both half malamute, half wolf—as well as two kids under thirteen plus a donkey that he bought Bonet as a gift. This is already a large menagerie to manage. And though Momoa tries to spend as much time at home as he can these days—he tries never to be out of town for more than a month, he really does—his filming schedule is jampacked for the next three years. It won't be *him* taking on the feeding and brushing and cleaning up after a new mutt, and he knows it. So he has some convincing to do. He began his campaign by introducing Rama to his children, Lola, twelve, and Wolf, ten, over FaceTime first thing in the morning. Of course they went nuts over the dog—a crucial chess move in the adoption process—but they don't have the final say in the matter. "It's up to *Mama*," Momoa says in a baby voice, looking tenderly into Rama's big, wet eyes. "Mama is the boss—everyone knows that."

Rama yawns and lets his tongue tumble out of the side of his mouth, a dippy, derpy gesture that shows me he doesn't quite understand the stakes of this situation. *Play your cards right,* I want to tell him, *and you could be Aquaman's dog. Don't screw this up.* Then Rama walks over to the side of the deck, squats next to a planter, and proceeds to take a long, dramatic dump.

A gleeful smile appears across Momoa's face as he starts to applaud. His claps sound like thunder. This grown man—who's forty, and a dad, and the lead in a major entertainment franchise—is getting pure, ecstatic joy from Rama's fecal theatrics. "I'm not, like, an old soul," he says. "I'm a young puppy." He turns his attention back to the dog. "All right, buddy!" he hoots, bursting with pride. "Good boy! And the *smell* following right behind. This interview smells like shit!"

Momoa takes a celebratory pull on his tallboy. He's picky about his beer: It must be Guinness, it must be fresh, and it must be freezing. He prefers it from the tap, or "straight from the mother's tit," as he puts it, but the can is the second-best thing. He's wearing a slouchy T-shirt with an illustration of the Hawaiian volcano Mauna Kea on the front, dirty pink flip-flops, a ratty pink velvet scrunchie holding back his sun-streaked mane, and a pair of black-and-gray-striped "boardshort pants" that he designed himself for his new label, called Aloha J. He got the name for the surfwear line (which is coming soon, he swears) from the regular sign-off he delivers to his 13.4 million Instagram followers; he trademarked the phrase in May.

Momoa—who posts under the handle @prideofgypsies, which was also the name of a filmmaking collective he started with a few friends back in 2010—is an avid, almost obsessive poster of Instagram Stories. He is constantly filming himself, whether he's climbing his in-home rock wall, doing a table read, or head-butting the camera. His face—weathered and bearded, with cheekbones like ax blades and eyes the iridescent green of a katydid—looks menacing in movies but softens on a phone screen. The scar that slashes through his left eyebrow, the result of getting hit in the face by a pint glass during a Hollywood bar brawl in 2008, looks less like a grisly battle trophy close-up and more like an alluring quirk. Momoa uses social media not to reinforce his reputation as an actor but to subtly undercut it; he's not the scary Dothraki king from *Game of Thrones* who ripped out a man's tongue with his bare hands. He's just a dude who takes bubble baths and razzes his friends and snuggles random dogs. The only part of his life that Momoa says he won't put online is his relationship with Bonet. "She's very, very, very private," he says. "I'm the opposite, like, *Come on in!*"

"I FEEL LIKE TOM WAITS AND NEIL YOUNG MIGHT STAY THE NIGHT IN MY MAN CAVE."

PAGE 62:
Shirt by **Dolce & Gabbana;** scrunchie by **Fendi;** pearl necklace by **Rainbow Gems;** stone necklace and stone ring by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.;** silver skull ring by **Book of Alchemy.**

THIS PAGE:
Shirt by **Louis Vuitton;** jeans by **Schaeffer's Garment Hotel;** boots by **Wesco;** watch by **Panerai;** scrunchie by **Fendi;** pearl necklace by **Rainbow Gems;** stone necklace by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.**

The day before we met, Momoa invited his followers inside a broken elevator between the fifth and sixth floors of L'Hermitage, where he, Rama, and several friends were stuck for two hours before the fire department arrived. Momoa live-streamed the whole thing, chronicling the increasing absurdity of this six-foot-four, 240-pound man trapped in a six-by-six-foot box with a clumsy dog and no easy way out. At one point, he attempted to play action hero by ripping off the ceiling panels, only to find there was a second ceiling above them. In the end, the fire department lowered a ladder into the shaft, and Momoa climbed it, with Rama in his massive arms. It's just the sort of thing you do for your bro, you know?

After I tell him that he *has* to keep Rama now, that they are meant to be together after surviving that ordeal, he gives me a mischievous nod. He's already instructed the dog's trainer, Tony Nikl, to teach Rama a few Momoa-specific tricks. When Rama hears the word *paparazzi,* he growls. When Rama hears the word *shaka,* a Hawaiian surfing hand gesture that roughly means "hang loose," he shakes. If you want Rama to cock his head sweetly and stare at you like you are a god? All you have to say is "Guinness." Rama is still working on that one.

MOMOA IS in Vancouver to finish filming *See,* created by Steven Knight, who wrote *Eastern Promises,* and directed by Francis Lawrence, who helmed the *Hunger Games* sequels. The dystopian drama, about a future world in which everyone is blind, is one of the first series for Apple's new platform, Apple TV+. And the company has bet big on Momoa by casting him as the lead. Though he's already carried a successful superhero franchise—*Aquaman* is to date the highest-grossing film based on a single DC character—*See* marks Momoa's first time shouldering a television

"THAT'S WHY I'M NOT THE BEST AT INTERVIEWS, BECAUSE I START SAYING SHIT I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO SAY."

Suit and shirt by **Gucci;** scrunchie by **Fendi;** pearl necklaces and beaded necklace by **Rainbow Gems;** stone ring by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.;** silver Lucifer ring, silver skull-and-wings ring, and silver skull ring by **Book of Alchemy;** skull bone ring by **Leroy's Wooden Tattoos.**

Coat by **Versace;** pajama pants by **Paul Stuart;** pearl necklace and beaded necklace by **Rainbow Gems;** stone necklace by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.;** silver skull-and-wings ring and silver skull ring by **Book of Alchemy;** skull bone ring by **Leroy's Wooden Tattoos.**

series. As a show of confidence, Apple reportedly spent somewhere in the neighborhood of $15 million on the pilot alone. "It is the biggest pilot that was ever shot," he says in a near whisper, a proud smirk appearing at one corner of his mouth. This is debatable, but it speaks to his sense of pride in the project.

It occurs to Momoa that perhaps it's something he should not have mentioned. Apple likes to keep these things tight. "But let's be honest: People leak shit," he sighs. "Like, don't fucking tell me, because I'll say something. That's why I'm not the best at interviews, because I start saying shit I'm not supposed to say." He jokes that he can't even keep his own kids' secrets, and that they know not to come to him to divulge their misdeeds. "I'd tell Mom right away," he says, laughing. "I'm not going to get busted over your shit." Still, he has managed to keep the conversation about *See* spoiler-free.

When I visited the show's set the morning before I met Momoa—while he was bonding with Rama back at the hotel, as evidenced on Instagram—I saw why he and Apple want to keep the series so under wraps. The company has poured a phenomenal amount of money and effort into the production. I walked through an abandoned mental asylum that had been converted into a derelict school for the show, and I saw an enormous pool that was drained and artfully distressed and filled with broken tiles and debris. The overall effect was so creepy that I felt my limbs go cold. Another room had become a cavernous, dark library full of dusty books, which set designers had aged and decayed to appear hundreds of years old.

In the world of *See,* a devastating illness wiped out most of humanity centuries ago. The earth has begun to renew itself; plants now thrive, green and feral, vining through the foundations of old buildings. The few humans left in this verdant paradise have gone blind. They live in small clans and communicate by sound and touch. Momoa plays Baba Voss, the patriarch of an indigenous tribe on an isolated mountaintop. He wears animal pelts and carries around a walking stick and a samurai sword forged from steel, which future humans call "God bone." When a pregnant woman wanders into his village and gives birth to two infants who can magically see, Baba Voss takes them under his wing and leads his followers on a migration across the plains.

This is Momoa as we haven't seen him before—as a sensitive husband and father, yes, but also as a blind person, one he plays with extreme specificity and reverence for those with the condition. He worked closely with a blindness coordinator, Joe Strechay (who, oddly enough, looks like a mini Momoa, which became his nickname on set), to make sure not only that he was respectful of the visually impaired but also that every move was an accurate reflection of them. Blind people are so rarely portrayed well onscreen, according to Strechay, who is blind. "In some shows, they might go up to a person and start feeling their face," he says. "That's a very, very intimate thing. We don't do it often, if we do it at all."

Momoa wore sleep shades for a couple weeks in order to properly experience being blind. "It's just amazing how everything else just opens up your body," he says of wearing the blindfold. "You're so fooled by your eyes. You cut off all these other senses but just feel and smell and hear, and you can echolocate." It was Momoa who helped bring some echo-

Coat, shirt, trousers, and boots by **Fendi;** headband worn on wrist by **Kū i Ke Kaila;** necklaces by **Rainbow Gems;** stone ring by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.;** silver skull ring by **Book of Alchemy;** skull bone ring by **Leroy's Wooden Tattoos.**

location details into the show; he suggested that his character might navigate by splashing through water and listening to the current.

MOMOA INVITES ME to the *See* wrap party at the Parlour, a ritzy pizza place nearby. He has rented out the back room for the cast and crew, and he says I am welcome to tag along and watch him "turn up." We ride the elevator down—it has been fixed, thank goodness—and pile into a black Suburban with a few of his friends. He has changed into jeans and a T-shirt that says HARLEY DAVIDSON MUSEUM on it. He still has the pink velvet scrunchie in his hair; he tells me it's the same one he brought to Karl Lagerfeld and Fendi as an inspiration for the custom suit he wore to last year's Oscars.

During the ten-minute drive to the industrial, gentrified waterfront neighborhood Yaletown, he plays gregarious tour guide. This is not the first time Momoa has shot in Vancouver, though the last time he stayed in the city, his life was entirely different. He was twenty-seven and living in a dingy studio apartment down a back alley. He was a regular on *Stargate Atlantis,* a Sci Fi Channel potboiler about a military team that explores the galaxy. He appeared in seventy-eight episodes. He didn't *love* the work, he admits, but it was a steady gig, and it became for him a sort of ad hoc film school. "It was where I learned how to shoot, how to write, how to do it all. We made twenty-two episodes in nine months. Day in, day out. The machine."

He was splitting his time between Vancouver and Los Angeles, where he was living with his dream girl. Those are his words, and he wants me to know he means it when he says dream girl. Lisa Bonet was not just a woman he'd met randomly one night at a jazz club in L. A. She was "literally my childhood crush," he says, blushing. When Momoa blushes, a pink hue spreads quickly over his bearded face, like a tropical sunset. "I mean, I didn't tell her that. I didn't let her know I was a stalker until after we had the kids."

Momoa was in Canada, he says as we pull up to the restaurant, which happens to be across the street from his old apartment, when he almost missed the birth of his first child because he was asleep. He regales the carpool with the tale. "It was the hottest day, July 20," he says, pointing at the second floor of the shabby brown building where he lived at the time. Bonet's water broke early, so he was not expecting to hear from her. "There was no air-conditioning in these places, so I was sleeping in the front window. I missed about seventy calls. And I woke up and freaked the fuck out."

He is really getting (continued on page 112)

Suit by **Dolce & Gabbana;** scrunchie by **Invisibobble;** pearl necklace by **Rainbow Gems;** stone necklace by **Red Rabbit Trading Co.;** skull bone ring by **Leroy's Wooden Tattoos;** silver Lucifer ring, silver skull-and-wings ring, and silver skull ring by **Book of Alchemy.**

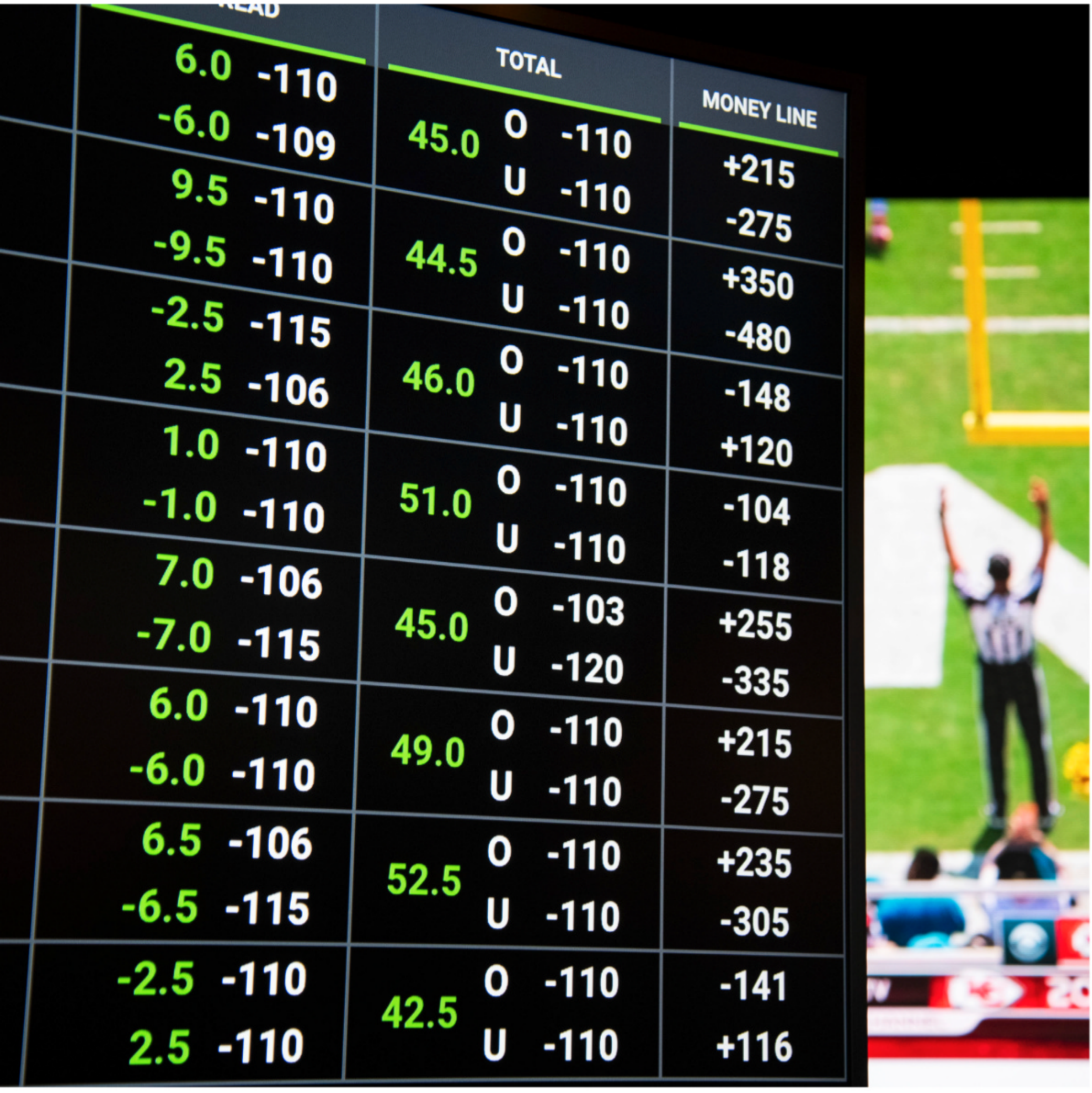
The Carpetbagging Gamblers

of the

Garden State

Good (?) news! The federal ban on sports betting has been lifted. But some places (New Jersey) make it easier than others (New York). What's a sports fanatic living on the wrong side of the Hudson to do? Migrate.

By DAVID HILL Photographs by BRIAN FINKE



NFL Opening Kickoff

Thursday, September 5

A train pulls into Hoboken Terminal. Commuters swarm the dim, dusty platform, then disperse, gone as fast as they came. The train disappears, too, back toward Manhattan, and a quiet settles in. A few people remain—a geriatric black man in a sweat suit and sandals, seated on a weathered bench; two pot-bellied white guys in oversize football jerseys, leaning against a concrete column; a handful of others—and all of them are staring at their phone. They may be strangers, but they belong to the same tribe. These are the carpetbagging gamblers of the Garden State.

They're not alone. The bettors enter this promised land anywhere along the 108-mile border between New York and New Jersey. They come down Route 17 to Mahwah, order disco fries at the State Line Diner, and wager. They cross the George Washington Bridge and bet in the KFC parking lot in Fort Lee. Some just pull over to the shoulder, whip out their phone, then U-turn back over the bridge. "I know people who drive to the Vince Lombardi rest station just to make their bets," Chris Christie told *The New York Times* in June, "and then turn around and go back to the city." In 2003, the pit stop was described by a trucker to *The New Yorker*'s John McPhee as "a real dangerous place. Whores. Dope. Guys who'll hit you over the head and rob you." Today, the trucker might add to his list the gamblers.

Speaking of Christie, he's no idle observer; he's the architect, and this is a valedictory moment years in the making. In 2011, the then governor of New Jersey nobly launched the battle to legalize sports betting in his state. Why shouldn't the government get a piece of the $150 billion wagered illegally on sports each year, as estimated by the American Gaming Association? His efforts paid off when, in May 2018, the Supreme Court overturned a 1992 federal law that had banned the practice in all but a few places. New Jersey was among the first states to take advantage, accepting its first bet within a month of the high court's ruling. Two, actually, each twenty dollars, placed by its current governor, Phil Murphy, on the New Jersey Devils to win the 2019 Stanley Cup (they didn't) and on defending champion Germany to win the World Cup (they were eliminated in the first round). Christie earned his rightful spot in the Sports Betting Hall of Fame, which is a thing, apparently. Since then, sixteen more states have passed such bills, including New York. None of them come close to New Jersey, which took in nearly $3 billion in its first year of operations. This past May, it surpassed Nevada to become the state in which the highest amount was bet on sporting events—nearly $320 million in that month alone. Why such success? Is it something in the waters of the Ramapo? Perhaps. But also, the state allows you to bet on your phone. Other states have

been reluctant to embrace the practice in an effort to drive gamblers toward the traditional brick-and-mortar houses of sin, like casinos and racetracks. Their mistake: In New Jersey, mobile betting accounts for a whopping 82 percent of the state's overall handle.

You don't need to be a resident to bet in New Jersey; you just need to be at least twenty-one. But you must be within its boundaries when your bet is placed. Out-of-staters have tried everything they can to get around these restrictions: deploying virtual private networks (VPNs) that mask users' IP addresses and therefore their location; trying to place bets from the Staten Island Ferry on its journey across New York Harbor; standing atop the Tri-States Monument in Port Jervis, their phones held high and oriented south-

Above: Outside Hoboken Terminal during NFL opening weekend. Right: With DIY sports betting, there's no ceiling to the fun.

ward. Nothing has worked, thanks to the efforts of the aptly named GeoComply, which is licensed by the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement to ensure all bettors comply with the state's geographical requirements. The company claims that in many cases it can locate users to within a few meters. Anecdotally, I can confirm. FanDuel, the most popular betting app in the state, pinged me while I was in the dead center of the Lincoln Tunnel, a hundred feet underwater and halfway between New York City and Weehawken.

Which is why New Yorkers are flooding west. But not too far west—44 percent of all mobile bets in New Jersey are made within two miles of the state border, according to GeoComply, with 80 percent made within ten miles. At a public hearing in May, FanDuel's COO said that as much as 25 percent of its business comes from New Yorkers crossing the border. For those carpetbagging gamblers without a car, Hoboken Terminal—which couldn't be closer to the state border without falling into the Hudson River—is a mecca.

As it changes them, so they change it: The gamblers step onto the platform and transform it into a literally underground betting parlor. The Borgata it isn't. But convenience beats out coddling. Here, you won't find leather seats at ritzy bars, nor giant television screens and waitresses showing too much skin. Here, in this dusky underworld, the house is open all day and all night, and it's less than twenty minutes from midtown Manhattan. Here, you can get cell service without leaving the turnstile, so the whole trip costs the price of a one-way fare. "I really don't want to spend more than maybe, like, an hour in New Jersey," says Harrison, twenty-seven, from Queens, one of the many carpetbagging gamblers I spoke to over the opening weekend of the NFL's 2019 season.

Some land here by trial and error. "I didn't know where you could pick up signal, so I just took the train to Jersey City," says Cooper, forty, who lives in Brooklyn. Rookie mistake. "So I got out of the station and still couldn't get signal. I was literally walking around on a Saturday night in Jersey City looking for signal." He kept searching, because what was once off-limits by law is now welcome. "I spent

"I really don't want to spend more than maybe, like, **an hour** in New Jersey."

twelve years in the military, and I never wanted to get myself into any trouble, so I never had a bookie and didn't do anything illegal. It was always in Vegas." He found Hoboken Terminal and its solid cell service, where he can fulfill a longtime wish without fear of repercussion.

For others, the convenience is a liability. Earlier, I met Chris, twenty-eight, a SoundCloud rapper who goes by "Cristo from the Bronx." He'd figured out the way to save the return fare all on his own, along with the cell-reception issue at the Jersey City station. Now he can come place bets whenever he feels like it, and he feels like it most strongly when his previous bets "are going left." I ask him to explain. If he's back home, watching a game unfold, and he knows he's losing, "I'm like, Oh, hell no, I'm not trying to lose four hundred bucks today. Let me go back and bet it back."

Shortly after, I meet Dylan, twenty-nine, a political-campaign operative from upstate New York who shares Chris's instinct. He'd already made the trip to New Jersey earlier in the summer to place his NFL bets for the season, but after A. J. Green, wide receiver for the Cincinnati Bengals, sustained an injury in training camp, Dylan tells me, "I ended up back out here on a Sunday morning to change all my bets." He admits, "I definitely bet more now than before."

With the betting scene now legal and regulated, the range of bets has expanded. I approach a guy in a neon safety vest who's furiously typing away at his phone. Ahmed, thirty-seven, from Peekskill, New York, is on his lunch break and looking to make it big on a parlay, the Hail Mary pass of sports bets, in which the gambler picks the winners of several games. The odds are much lower, so the payouts are much higher, which is why local bookies don't like taking parlays. "They don't want to take that risk," Ahmed says. "The biggest parlay you could do with a bookie was four teams. The biggest parlay you can do with these guys is fifteen." Ahmed has a magic touch for them. "I had a nine-team parlay last year for twelve grand. Two weeks after that, I had an eight-team parlay for ten grand." Lunch hour's nearly over, so he excuses himself to enter his bets, then he's gone.

First Sunday

Sunday, September 8

DraftKings, New Jersey's second-most-popular mobile-betting app, holds a party in Hoboken . . .

Three days later. It's the first Sunday of the NFL's regular season. Thirteen games are on the schedule, which means twenty-six teams are playing, which means the betting opportunities are aplenty. DraftKings, the second-most-popular mobile-betting operator in New Jersey, has decided to make an event of it, holding a pop-up party with a few former NFL players at a bar not far from Hoboken Terminal. The vibe is upbeat, though contrived. Maybe it's the cost—fifty dollars, unless you've been designated one of the app's VIP players—or the company: Guest appearances include legitimate onetime star Donovan McNabb as well as Rashad Jennings, whose career on *Dancing with the Stars* is more distinguished than his career in professional football. Or maybe it's an issue of convenience: Why bother going to a party to place bets when you can do so from your phone?

Ali, twenty-nine, like several attendees I meet, is a carpetbagging gambler. "It's just annoying that we can't do it in New York," he shouts over the din of four games blaring from four television screens. "It's stupid." Until that changes, he's limited by the vagaries of geography and time. "Unfortunately, I can't bet weekly, because I don't have the time to come in every week." (Ali, like everyone else I spoke to for this story, despite my best efforts to find otherwise, is a man.)

I head back to Hoboken Terminal. There, on the platform, gamblers abound, though not all are willing to talk. Nick, twenty-eight, from Queens, explains: "It"—gambling—"has that negative stigma behind it, you know, where it's like you're a degenerate, you're a shitty person and whatnot." (Say what you will about sports betting's morality, but placing bets has never been illegal. It's taking them that was banned.) He learned to bet from his father. "Other kids throw a baseball in the backyard with their dads, or they're into cars or fishing. With me and my dad, it was always, What's the line on this game?" Nick, hopeful that public sentiment is shifting, hosts a sports-betting podcast called *Veterans Minimum*.

. . . during NFL opening weekend.
Tickets are $50 for the plebes and free for the app's high-rolling VIPs.

FanDuel said that as much as **25 percent** of its business comes from New Yorkers crossing the border.

The whole ecosystem is changing. ESPN and Fox Sports 1 are already airing shows dedicated to betting. Buffalo Wild Wings is testing a pilot program to roll out sports betting in its New Jersey franchises. Major league teams are investing in technology to bring in-game betting to arenas and ballparks, where one day you may be able to place bets on every pitch or free throw or first down from a screen at your seat. As NBA commissioner Adam Silver argued in a *New York Times* op-ed in 2014, a landmark moment for the movement, states run—and profit from—the lottery. What's so different about sports gambling? Silver didn't spill much ink on the fact that the major leagues and their teams stand to profit from a pot of money previously illegal and out of reach.

What about the fans? How might legalized betting alter their relationships with the sports they love? The ban was put in place for a reason, after all: Those with a financial stake in the outcome have been known to sway a game or two—just ask the 1919 White Sox or the 1978–79 Boston College basketball team. Then again, the ban was never all that effective, as evidenced by anyone who's ever collected the betting pool for their (continued on page 113)

FIVE *Ways to Buy a* WATCH *and the* Best New Watches of the Year

FROM MECHANICAL TO SMARTWATCH, AFFORDABLE TO ASTRONOMICAL, VINTAGE TO BRAND-NEW, HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCORING YOUR PERFECT TIMEPIECE (OR TIMEPIECES) RIGHT NOW

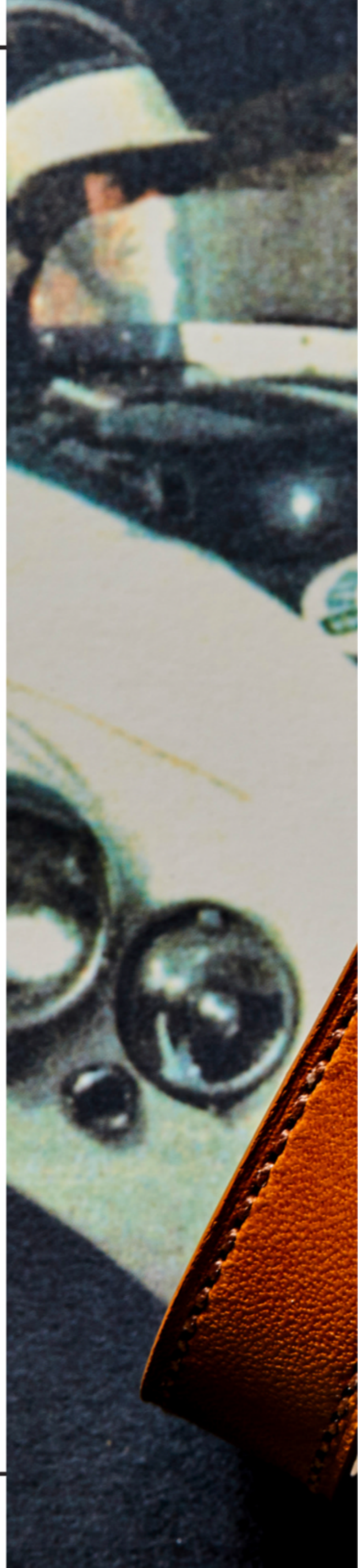
1

Go Boutique

KNOW YOUR BRANDS OR WANT TO DISCOVER SOME? START HERE.

Spending four figures on a watch is the beginning of a long-term relationship, so it pays to go through a respectable courtship period first. If you've already got your heart set on a particular brand, or just a couple, the monobrand boutiques will likely offer you the deepest and most knowledgeable service, both before and after they have nailed you as a customer. Maintenance is also something to consider, and service varies from brand to brand, so it's a good idea to ask. Some will service on-site or at a local certified facility. But if you really put your watch through the grinder, they may recommend that it go on a lengthy and sometimes costly holiday in Switzerland.

If, on the other hand, you want to play the field a little (to further strangle the metaphor), try the new breed of multibrand stores. Watches of Switzerland, a newcomer to the U.S., already has two sizable stores in New York, in SoHo and Hudson Yards, with a third in Las Vegas. They feature concessions for many leading watchmakers and an accessible mood far removed from that of traditional jewelry and watch stores. Ask about maintenance here, too. —*Nick Sullivan*



Photographs by Jeffrey Westbrook

Watches of the Year

CARTIER CRASH

According to company legend, the Crash commemorates a fatal automobile accident in London in the 1960s. A melted Baignoire Allongée watch recovered from the wreckage inspired Jean-Jacques Cartier, then the head of Cartier's London operations, to create a tribute to the victim. Well, that's one story. The other is that it was inspired by Salvador Dalí's melting pocket watch in his painting *The Persistence of Memory*. Either way, this new Crash is an enduring peculiarity among the most collectible timepieces. *Price on request; 800-227-8437*

Analog Lives!

Why Mechanical Matters

THE FOUNDER OF THE WATCH WORLD'S FAVORITE WEBSITE MAKES THE CASE FOR MACHINERY

In September of this year, Hodinkee published the findings of a report by the NPD Group, a luxury-industry analyst, revealing that the list of the top five watch brands in the United States for the past twelve months looked a little different than in years past. Patek Philippe was in fourth place, and almighty Rolex was there in second. But in fifth? Samsung. Third? Fitbit. In first—you guessed it—Apple. Now, I suppose this isn't all that shocking, but it certainly raised a few eyebrows.

One must remember that both Patek and Rolex have been selling watches for more than a century. And they are still popular; just have a look around any major metropolis and you'll see Submariners on the wrists of countless urbanites. But that still doesn't change the fact that Apple went from selling zero dollars per year in watches to surpassing even Rolex in sales this fall. That took five years. And that was prior to the Series 5 launch. It's a jarring fact for those of us who care about mechanical matters, but it requires a bit of context.

Mechanical watches, to put it bluntly, are doing just fine. Patek Philippe and Rolex, both privately held companies, are rumored to have each had a record-setting year, for the second year in a row. The traditional top five feel the same way: Cartier's Tank remains an icon. Omega has gone from strength to strength, coupling dynamic limited-edition launches catering to hardcore #watchnerds and to astronauts, and TAG Heuer, which is celebrating forty years of the Monaco, is still as cool as Steve McQueen's wrist.

There is no denying the rise of the smartwatch, but let's keep some perspective. The mechanical watch, with its everlasting, always assuring tick, is going nowhere—and while there are some new players in the space, one can be certain that in fifty years, a Submariner will look like a Submariner, and a Speedmaster will look like a Speedmaster. And that is a wonderful thing. —*Ben Clymer*

2

Pony Up at the Auction

ONLINE OR IRL, IT'S MORE AFFORDABLE THAN YOU MIGHT THINK

Perhaps you picture a bunch of sniffy, monocled men waving paddles. And, well, eyewear aside, there is some of that. One could say the spectacle is part of the point: the thrill of seeing six- and seven-figure pieces of wrist jewelry going once and twice in an equally resplendent room. But for those of us who wouldn't feel at home in a stateroom on the *Titanic,* Rebecca Ross of Christie's says that modern auctions are far more accommodating to newbies than one might expect. Did you know, for instance, that they're open to the public? "They can seem intimidating, but I'd encourage everyone to come in and watch one—they're really entertaining." But if that's too much an ask, the bidding has gone online as well, with more-affordable lots for first-time bidders. And even the remote auctions can have an in-person element. "I like to get to know clients and see what they want," Ross says. She also says it's a good opportunity to try on some watches. But ultimately, auction houses remain the best places to find pieces with provenance—the December live sale at Christie's will include, among other rarities, a pocket watch once belonging to Ernest Hemingway. So check it out: Be a wallflower, drink in the ambience, and get the lay of the land. *—Dennis Tang*

Watches of the Year

ROLEX GMT-MASTER II

Often it's the simple things that please the most. The GMT-Master II has a separate twenty-four-hour hand that can be read off the bezel and reset using the crown, jumping easily from hour to hour in either direction independent of the minute and hour hands. But then there's also a new movement, the high-visibility dial, the high-grade 904L stainless steel—known as Oystersteel—used for the case and Jubilee band, and the distinctive black-and-blue ceramic bezel on this year's model that prompted Rolex fans to nickname it the Batman. What's not to like? *$9,250; rolex.com*

Oh, Hi, Siri

A Gentle Argument for the Smartwatch

WORTH HAVING, EVEN IF YOU'RE A PURIST

I didn't intend for this to happen. But it has: The Apple watch has become my primary watch. And I'm okay with that.

You see, I've always appreciated OG watches. I got my first real, luxe watch as a graduation present, a two-tone Cartier Pasha chronograph. Since then, I've added some IWCs, a Panerai, a TAG Monaco. Among these were some beaters: an old mid-nineties Swiss Army watch and a few Casio G-Shocks for vacations to more unscrupulous places or if I was doing anything remotely active.

But then the Apple watch was released in 2015. It was more of a tech-lust purchase. I got one with the Milanese band. After a few weeks, I realized it was the most comfortable watch I'd ever worn. Soon enough, my beater watches were ignored. The luxe numbers would come out only when a more dressed-up outfit called for one.

Here's the thing: Although the Apple watch has now surpassed all Swiss watches worldwide in sales, it's not necessarily a zero-sum game. It doesn't mean you can't impress some dude with a Submariner one day and a toddler with the animated *Toy Story* watch face the next. The two can coexist in your life. That said, the Apple watch has pretty much replaced the idea of the beater watch for me because, even at the low end—you can get one for as little as $200—they possess a refinement that mechanical watches in that price class rarely have. And with all of the other features—heart-rate monitoring, step counts, the ability to read your messages instantly—they're also some of the most utilitarian watches around.

So if you're a luxury-watch guy, check them out. You'd be surprised by the new titanium models, the ceramic watch shown here, and especially the murdered-out Hermès edition (see page 11). And if you're just a normal-watch guy, consider trying on something a little more special. —*Kevin Sintumuang*

Watches of the Year

SEIKO PRESAGE ARITA

While Seiko is renowned for dive watches, it still produces dressier pieces through its Presage line. This year's line features an Arita porcelain dial tinged with blue. It's a relatively affordable way into mechanical dress watches. *$1,700; seikowatchesusa.com*

Watches of the Year

ZENITH CHRONOMASTER 2

The El Primero, Zenith's groundbreaking automatic chronograph movement, which debuted in 1969, is displayed beautifully in this anniversary edition's titanium case with a ceramic bezel. *$9,600; zenith-watches.com*

3

Try Pre-owned

DEDICATED VENDORS ARE MAKING THE SECOND-HAND MARKET SAFER

In many ways, old watches are like used cars: Their value varies greatly depending on their life experiences, and it's nigh impossible, as a layman, to know what's happened under the hood. And as with cars, pre-owned watches "have historically been a very fragmented and shady industry," says Hamilton Powell of Atlanta's Crown & Caliber. But while carmakers long ago got into the "certified pre-owned" game, watch manufacturers have yet to officially stamp any factory-refurbished wares—which is where a pre-owned vendor like Crown & Caliber (crownandcaliber.com) comes in, offering a streamlined process for both sellers and buyers. A seller ships the watch in a prepaid box, then it's sold to you, freshly serviced and with a warranty. Most important, a reputable vendor introduces an innovative new element to buying used: consistency. "The heartbeat of our business is data," says Powell. "Where watches used to be priced by a dealer's gut, our historical database ensures you're getting a fair price." The result is a wide selection of modern watches, but without needing a wing and a prayer to find a steal, as you would on, say, eBay. Want a solid deal on your first Rolex or Panerai? This could be the way. —*D. T.*

Watches of the Year

MONTBLANC HERITAGE MONOPUSHER CHRONOGRAPH

When Montblanc took over the Minerva factory, it hardwired into 150 years of fine watchmaking. The Heritage Monopusher released this year echoes the elegant chronographs made by Minerva in the 1940s and '50s, with a single button inside the crown to start and stop the timing functions. A slinky Milanese mesh bracelet, a favorite of those decades, just adds to the retro feel.
$5,160; montblanc.com

Bright Now

Golden Hour

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A BALLER TO ROCK SOME WRIST CANDY. HERE ARE OUR TOP PICKS UNDER $500.

Timex Marlin Automatic, $259

An easy way to get into a mesh band.

4

Take Me to Your Dealer

WANT RARE? WE'VE GOT A GUY FOR THAT.

Think of a great dealer as your infallible guide to the unknown reaches of the watch world: your Sacajawea, your Virgil. Great dealers, like James Lamdin of New York's Analog Shift, can direct the most aimless novice to a watch he'll love—they can even bid for you at auctions to ensure you get a good price. But what dealers really excel at is working for the man who knows exactly what he wants—and the more exactly, the better. "On my first day of business," says Lamdin, a client said, "'I'm looking for this vintage Omega. Here's a picture of my brother's; the matching one was lost. Can you help?'" He delivered it a year later. A lifetime of work goes into that knowledge base, such that a dealer knows what's out there and maybe even the private collection in which a particular make and model might be found. And for all that tireless scouring, Lamdin says his commissions are flexible: "I don't charge a standard fee, but you can also pay me in a good bottle of single malt." *—D. T.*

Watches of the Year

TUDOR BLACK BAY P01

The Tudor Black Bay P01 is a watch that never was. Till now, that is. Developed in 1967 in response to exacting new specifications from the U.S. Navy, the P01 was intended as an update to the classic Prince Submariner that Tudor had made since the 1950s. The P01 had notable new features, like the winding crown at four o'clock and a locking system for the rotating bezel. But when the Navy opted instead for another Tudor dive watch, the Commando, as the P01 was code-named, was consigned to a Tudor filing cabinet. Until this year. *$3,950; tudorwatch.com*

Bulova Computron, $395

Inspired by one of Bulova's designs from the 1970s.

Citizen Brycen, $295

It's all about the burnt-orange face.

Fossil Neutra Chronograph, $145

The rose-gold-tone case and the green straps are a killer combo.

Casio Vintage, $75

The classic digital watch done up in gold.

Watches of the Year

RADO TRUE THINLINE LES COULEURS

Twenty years ago, Rado was the first watch brand to perfect the use of ceramics, a complex form of material science, still in development even now. The most challenging thing of all is creating novel colors. So the new True Thinline Les Couleurs Le Corbusier watches, re-creating hues from the legendary architect's theory of Architectural Polychromy, are a bold leap forward. The watches are slim, hypoallergenic, and scratch resistant. *$2,100 each; rado.com*

Chasing Unicorns

My Mount Rushmore: The Tornek-Rayville

RARE WATCH, COOL BACKSTORY

It's sobering to think I will never own a Tornek-Rayville TC-900. "A what the what?" you might ask. It's a name still relatively unknown except to aficionados of dive watches. Made in two short runs totaling around a thousand pieces in 1964 and 1966, it was designed for U. S. military divers to strict government specifications. The military wanted a Blancpain Fifty Fathoms and had already tested it. But thanks to the Buy American Act, it was not permitted to purchase foreign brands. To circumvent the ban, Blancpain's enterprising New York importer, one Allen Tornek, added his name to Rayville, a registered brand name of Blancpain since the 1930s. Sneaky! Many of these watches were reportedly later destroyed by the U. S. government, which makes them even rarer than they might have been. With an estimated thirty to fifty survivors, current prices hover above $100,000. Oh well, maybe I'll just buy a 911. —*N. S.*

5

To eBay or Not to eBay?

WHERE TO GO FOR THE ODDITIES

Nearly all the value in a vintage watch lies in its provenance. The box, papers, service history, and correct serial numbers will add greatly to its worth. But buy a watch on eBay and you are positively begging to be ripped off. Nothing is ever quite what it seems in cyberspace.

And among the wares from honest and scrupulous eBay dealers lurk thousands of watches whose sellers—either knowingly or not—are offering you a bastard, a Frankenwatch, with parts shunted together over the years by fixers just to keep them going (honest) or to deliberately drop in an incorrect movement (dishonest).

Look for big brand names or iconic models and you might as well be throwing your money away. There are far safer avenues through which to find your dream Submariner or your Monaco.

That said, if you're seeking something very specific and you do your research, you can find new-to-market collectibles at good prices. As with most things on eBay, the less known a model or brand is, the more likely you will score something interesting. Alternatively, if you approach eBay with an open mind and an eye for the esoteric and you set realistic expectations and sensible price limits, you can also find great conversation pieces. —*N. S.*

Watches of the Year

BREITLING SUPEROCEAN II AUTOMATIC 46

Breitling's Superocean II Automatic 46 is designed for men who expect their sports watch to combine robust performance and macho good looks. Its sizable 46mm DLC-coated stainless-steel case features an easy-read black dial and a matching rubber strap. *$4,850; breitling.com*

Time and Time Again

The Man Who Bought the Same Watch Twice

CONFESSIONS OF A WATCHAHOLIC

"I don't collect anything with intention," says restaurateur Sang Yoon, founder of the Los Angeles burger-and-beer joint Father's Office. "I have an appreciation for supremely detailed craftsmanship."

Yoon isn't so much a collector of objects as he is a guy who just loves finely made things. That includes fast cars (ask him about his Mercedes-Benz AMG E 63 S Wagon), Champagne (he owns more than sixty-five hundred bottles), and luxury watches (he stashes more than a hundred models in bank vaults across SoCal).

After Yoon graduated from high school, his father bequeathed three watches to him: a stainless-steel Rolex Datejust, a Patek Philippe Calatrava, and an IWC Portofino. A fixation soon followed that didn't always square with his income. "The first watch I bought for myself was an Omega Seamaster. It was like $1,200. I was like, Fuck, do I even have $1,200?"

He now owns 106 timepieces, ranging from ultrarare GMTs to a single Richard Mille. On a trip to Hawaii, a Rolex Deepsea Sea-Dweller caught Yoon's eye and he purchased it on the spot.

Several years later, in Hong Kong, he made another impulse buy. Months after that, he was checking out one of his vaults. Whoops. He now had two of the exact same Deepsea Sea-Dweller. Talk about First World problems. He realized his error and traded the first one to another collector. The second one he kept and still occasionally wears to this day.

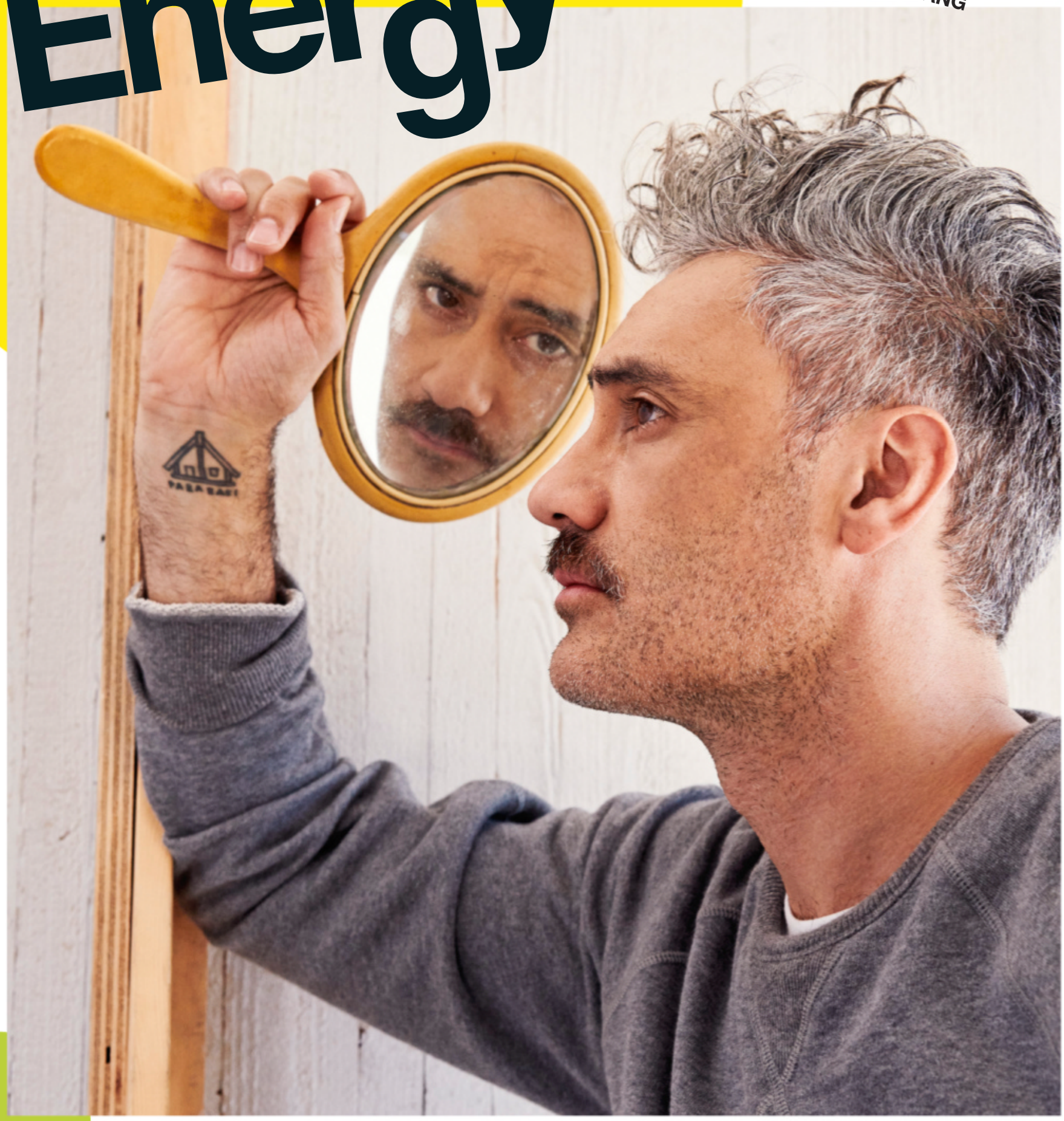
That moment made Yoon realize something: He's got to cut back on the watches. He may be unloading some of his collection soon. "The problem is I don't wear all of them. There's about forty I've never touched. They're still in the box." —*Daniel Dumas*

THIS PAGE:
Jacket ($1,495) and sweater ($158) by **Boss;** trousers ($690) by **Salvatore Ferragamo;** sneakers ($245) by **Grenson.**

OPPOSITE:
Sweatshirt ($390) and T-shirt ($259) by **the Row.**

Big Kid Energy

Photographs by PETER YANG



By KEVIN SINTUMUANG

Following the $854 million success of *Thor: Ragnarok,* which he imbued with the boy-in-a-sandbox energy of his irreverent indie films, Kiwi actor and director TAIKA WAITITI takes on the Marvel, *Star Wars,* and DC universes. But first, *Jojo Rabbit,* a World War II "anti-hate satire" in which he plays a German kid's imaginary friend: Hitler. (Yeah, that one.)

“Taikaaaa. Taikaaaa,”

she whispers.

Jacket ($5,195), T-shirt ($375), and trousers ($1,195) by **Giorgio Armani.**

In a Mediterranean-style house, built into the side of a hill in the Los Feliz neighborhood of Los Angeles, not too far away from Walt Disney’s first home, Taika Waititi’s assistant is trying to coax him out of his bedroom. She thinks he’s asleep. And the complex Swiss coffee machine seems to be on the fritz. So while I wait, I try to fix it.

I’m about to implement the unplug-it-and-plug-it-back-in method when I feel something ping my back. I see a small object go skittering across the floor. A bottle cap? I turn and there is Waititi, wearing a tropical-print shirt and stylish drawstring pants and, while in a ninja-like pose, holding a large, capless bottle of Perrier. He has the boyish energy of a walking GIF.

“I’ve been standing here for five minutes watching you, bro,” the forty-four-year-old director/actor/producer says. Then he gives me a hug. When in playful mode, he speaks with the country-Kiwi accent of Korg, the charming rock beast he played in *Thor: Ragnarok* (which he also directed), whom he based on the sweet, enormous Polynesian bouncers he would encounter outside clubs in his hometown of Wellington, New Zealand. The rest of the time, he speaks with a charming, soothing New Zealand accent featuring just a touch of thespian gravitas—a perfect delivery system for dry humor.

He moves a pink blazer from the back of a kitchen chair so I can sit and begins eating his very Californian breakfast—eggs and avocado toast with a side of bacon.

Trying to make conversation, I ask him about a sculpture in the kitchen. He gives me the shrug emoji. “I don’t know what any of this stuff is, bro! It’s not my house!”

He’s been so busy that he’s crashing here to avoid interrupting his family’s schedule. Before *Thor,* he split his time between New Zealand and Los Angeles, but now he and his wife, Chelsea Winstanley, and their two young daughters have settled into a home nearby in L.A. They’ve had to: Waititi is directing the sequel to *Ragnarok;* directing an episode of *The*

Waititi manages to bring big kid energy to (clockwise from top left) vampires (*What We Do in the Shadows*), Norse gods (*Thor: Ragnarok*), and Aryan assholes (*Jojo Rabbit*).

Mandalorian, the first live-action television series in the *Star Wars* universe; acting in DC's new *Suicide Squad* movie, aptly called *The Suicide Squad;* directing a movie about the Samoan soccer team that, against all odds, made it to the World Cup; rebooting *Flash Gordon;* and releasing his latest film, *Jojo Rabbit,* which he wrote the screenplay for, directed, and stars in. (It's out now.)

So the only personal artifacts around this house are a pile of books on the dining-room table and a picture of his daughters. "The thing with this place is, you say, 'I don't live in L. A.' and yet you do live here," he explains, in that casual yet philosophical manner in which you describe being happy with an arranged marriage after a decade. "Both my kids were born here—well, one of them was born in Venice Beach and the other one was born in Hawaii. So it all really is sort of laid out."

He swallows some avocado and resigns himself to the idea that he is now kinda sorta an Angeleno.

***Jojo Rabbit* is the** story of a ten-year-old German boy, Jojo, who discovers a Jewish girl hiding in the home he shares with his mother, Rosie, during World War II. Waititi calls it an "anti-hate satire," and the satire is introduced through the character of the boy's imaginary friend: Adolf Hitler.

Some people, including, according to *Variety,* a Disney executive, have found the movie controversial. "I'm not really sure if that's true," Waititi says. "I'm not sure if I should be saying this, because I don't want it to feel like I'm defending myself, but [Bob Iger, CEO of the Walt Disney Company] and [Alan F. Horn, cochairman and chief creative officer of Walt Disney Studios] have seen the film and have sent me emails like, 'This is fucking a very important film; we love the film.'" He considers the situation. "This is not a film to be afraid of, by the way. It's not challenging in the least."

Given the recent surge of neo-Nazism, it's strange that a movie about a boy and his friend Adolf is not capital-*A* about white nationalism. "It was around Charlottesville when people were asking, 'Is this a reaction to that?'" he says. "And it was like, no, this is just something I was trying to make, and weirdly, it's becoming more and more pertinent."

Also weird—and hilarious: Hitler is played by Waititi, a Polynesian Jew.

A friend recommended a book on Hitler, and after reading four pages, Waititi decided he didn't want to know anything about the guy. "I wanted him to be a buffoon," he says, like Drop Dead Fred, the troublemaking imaginary friend of Phoebe Cates in the eponymous 1991 cult classic.

Then there was the physical transformation. "It was fucking horrible," Waititi says. "It was summer in Europe, boiling hot. I was wearing these big fucking hats and sunblock. So I was like the palest I'd been." He pauses. "I was kind of losing my mind. I think when your body is deficient of vitamins, you kind of go a bit mad. And this is before the costume! This was just me trying to be white. I can't go in the sun or I'll fucking go brown in like five minutes. And so then I had to get the chemical in my hair to straighten it, because my hair"—here he just points at his shock of salt-and-pepper curls—"then dye it black." He sighs. "I was just like this fucking forty-year-old car salesman who was trying to get on Tinder or something." He says in a Hitler-as-a-weenie-salesman voice: "This is my chance to be young again!"

And in a way, it was. "He's conjured from the mind of a ten-year-old, so he had to be a ten-year-old," the director says.

Childhood is a preoccupation for Waititi, the son of a Polynesian painter and farmer named Tiger and a schoolteacher named Robin, who is of Russian-Jewish heritage. Part of his childhood was spent in Raukokore, where he went to a school with fewer than forty kids, and the rest was spent in Wellington. When he was

young, he was obsessed with drama and the visual arts—specifically drawing—and his family encouraged his creative pursuits. His mom would often have him analyze poems. "It was sort of a form of punishment," he tells me.

He went to college in Wellington with other creative types, including Jemaine Clement and Bret McKenzie of *Flight of the Conchords.* Together they did improv and fringy film things. Eventually he had an epiphany: *I should really be creating my own movies.* In 2004, he released a short film, *Two Cars, One Night,* which explores the precocious conversations of children in a parking lot outside a pub; it was nominated for an Oscar. That turned out to be a dry run for his coming-of-age movie *Boy,* about an eleven-year-old trying to reconnect with his father, who's just been released from prison after seven years. *Boy* established the heart and humor that Waititi would carry through to *Hunt for the Wilderpeople,* in which an orphan and his reluctant father figure escape from the law in the New Zealand bush. Along with *Jojo Rabbit,* the two full-length films make up a trilogy featuring lost boys as the central figures and focusing on the resilience and purity of youth, the ephemerality of life, and the impact of absent dads.

That's Taika Waititi, auteur. Then there is Taika Waititi, comic entertainer. At the Oscars ceremony in 2005, when the camera panned over to him during the short-film-award presentation, he was fake-sleeping. Instant fame. In 2014, he and Clement codirected the hysterical *What We Do in the Shadows,* a vampire mockumentary that has been spun off into two TV shows. It was also one of the movies that helped convince Marvel that Waititi was the person to reinvigorate the *Thor* franchise, with *Ragnarok.*

It was the perfect match.

Bizarre and delightfully goofy, an action movie with an out-there electronic soundtrack more in the spirit of *Big Trouble in Little China* than *The Avengers, Ragnarok* grossed $854 million and catapulted Waititi to commercial success.

But even as his bankability in Hollywood grows, he retains the energy of an outsider, the insatiable curiosity and lack of social pretense of a ten-year-old boy mixed with a kind of professorial intelligence. It's quite telling that the one ship that he personally designed for *Ragnarok* was simply a box—the ultimate imaginative toy if you are under three. If you watch any of the behind-the-scenes reels from his movies, his approach seems to be as loose as it would be if he were playing with kids in a sandbox. "Frequently his movies are told through the eyes of children, and I think he himself is able to sort of strip back all those walls we put around ourselves as adults, to just connect on a really basic level," says Carthew Neal, Waititi's producing partner—they've known each other since 2001, and their company, Piki Films, helped produce *Jojo Rabbit.* "He creates these environments where people are able to let their guard down and let the best of them come out."

To an American, however, there's something else that's different about Waititi's films. He brings something of New Zealand to them. Kiwis, he tells me, don't like to talk about feelings.

"But all of your films are about feelings," I say.

"We don't talk about it, though," he says. "We make films about it. No one in the films talks about feelings."

This is true, I realize: "It's just so cringey to us," Waititi says. "Americans love talking about feelings, to the point where it's like, *I don't think you actually feel these things; you just like talking about these feelings.* Which is what gives us the impression that Americans are fake."

Earlier, I had asked him if he knows any filmmakers as busy as he is who don't live in L. A. He cited Peter Jackson, the Kiwi director of the *Lord of the Rings* films. And he said something almost melancholy. "New Line [the film studio] gave him all of that faith, which is just fucking incredible. There was no, like, Will Smith in *Lord of the Rings.* But, you know, [Jackson] managed to stay in his hometown, shoot there, and live there."

Waititi may not have ascended quite to Jackson's heights, yet being handed the keys to a corner of the Marvel Universe is not unlike building the filmic world of Middle-earth. But then, Waititi had to leave. So the irony is that it's the success of comic entertainer Taika Waititi that defines the concerns of auteur Taika Waititi: Is he a lost boy here in America? Will the Hollywood machine continue to let his inner kid stay in the picture?

A few weeks after my visit with Waititi, *Jojo Rabbit* would win the prestigious People's Choice Award at the Toronto International Film Festival, a harbinger of an Academy Award nomination for Best Picture. Around then, I went to see the film again. Sam Rockwell, in the way only he can, gives the character of Captain Klenzendorf, a whiskey-swigging Nazi-general-turned-camp-counselor, the perfect balance of humor and fatherly heart. Scarlett Johansson's portrayal of Rosie displays the complexity of single motherhood. But it is the performances of Roman Griffin Davis as Jojo and Thomasin McKenzie as Elsa Korr, the Jewish girl hiding in his home, that are the mana of the film.

What struck me even more upon a second viewing was how much the movie deals with the imagination, with creating little worlds for ourselves as a way to hope for the future and cope with the present. Jojo does this through drawings in his notebook and, of course, the manifestation of his imaginary friend, Adolf.

Waititi suggested we go outside, as if what we were going to cover needed the contrast of the BRIGHT L. A. SUN. He lit a cigarette and offered me sunglasses.

It made me think back to our conversation. At one point, Waititi suggested we go outside, as if what we were going to cover needed the contrast of the bright L. A. sun. He lit a cigarette and offered me sunglasses. He offered me a cigarette, too.

"For me, it's easier to make films—even though it takes two years—than to go to therapy," he told me. I asked about his late dad, whom he's described as an outsider artist before that was a thing in New Zealand; his work had a primitive, Henri Rousseau vibe. "He was an enigma," he said. "We had an off and on relationship through my life." He stops. He starts, instead, to talk about his mom. About realizing how interesting his mother is, about how *Jojo Rabbit* is probably more about mothers than his past films.

I also asked what it was like being a dad to his two daughters.

"It's just better than anything," he said. "You have these little things, these little creatures, who just want to hang out with you and play. They want to give you cuddles and to be your friend. In New Zealand, our bullshit meters are very sensitive, and so, coming to America, you're like, *I don't trust anyone.* So to have these two people who are just genuine, who when they try to trick you, it's just to get ice cream—you know? That's it."

Of course Taika Waititi would make a movie about Hitler and give him a small piece of home, the earnestness of being some little boy's imaginary friend, who, while not offering the best advice at times, does make his best effort.

His assistant popped out to say it was time to leave for their meeting with Marvel.

Waititi put out his cigarette, and together we looked at the hills. They appeared golden at high noon. "L. A. does not disappoint, huh?"

Shirt ($420) and trousers ($280) by **Officine Générale;** sneakers by **John Lobb;** vintage Seiko watch and sunglasses, Waititi's own.

Styling by
MICHAEL NASH

Prop styling by Edward Murphy. Grooming by Su Han at Dew Beauty Agency.

The new normal is here, *in Traverse City, Michigan, as it is in thousands of other places, large and small, while the* **climate crisis poses the chilling existential question:** *Are the political system and institutions of the United States* **strong enough to confront it?**

THE FIRST ELECTION AT THE END OF THE WORLD

By CHARLES P. PIERCE

ILLUSTRATION BY **Matt Chase**

There is no beach where there once was a beach.

There is a strip of sand that can hardly be called a beach, and on a cool afternoon at the beginning of September, seven kids were splashing through the waters at the edge of Grand Traverse Bay in that part of Lake Michigan that cuts into the lower half of the state of Michigan, providing a pinkie finger to the state's mitten configuration. Not far from where there once was a beach, you can see a dock submerged just below the surface. The water is so clear you can count the boards. This is where Lake Michigan had come to rest at the end of the summer of 2019.

According to the Army Corps of Engineers, water levels in the Great Lakes hit record highs in 2019, and the combined levels of Lakes Michigan and Huron was thirty inches higher than its customary average in August. This is a consequence of heavier than usual rainfall, and then a heavier than usual snowfall, resulting in a heavier than usual snowmelt

Tk

VOTE

that combined with another unusually rainy spring. The lakes rose because of a combination of exacerbated weather events.

Traverse City and the surrounding area lost more than a beach and a dock. In June, Clinch Park downtown flooded. The boardwalk along the Boardman River was completely underwater. Parking lots near the lake were eroded from below and collapsed. Picturesque, century-old shanties in the Fishtown section of Leelanau County were caught between rising water in canals and rivers and higher lake water and seemed in danger of falling into the lake. These conditions were general all over the vast Great Lakes region. More water means higher and more powerful waves. More powerful waves means more flooding. As far back as May, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York warned residents around Lake Ontario to prepare themselves for floods and reminded them that, in 2017, wind-driven waves and high water had caused tens of millions of dollars' worth of damage there. The same thing happened last May in Rochester and elsewhere along the lake. Nature has a very distinct way of enforcing the consequences of human behavior.

"Than usual." That's something we hear more and more these days. Higher than usual. Heavier than usual. More powerful than usual. Pile up enough of these, flood enough streets, drown enough docks, and you are forced to change what you consider the usual to be. In June, two scientists from the University of Michigan, Drew Gronewold and Richard Rood, published their findings on the changing nature of the usual around the Great Lakes. They wrote that behind all the things that were bigger and greater than usual was the vast and specific dark energy of the climate crisis.

. . . Since 2014 the issue has been too much water, not too little. High water poses just as many challenges for the region, including shoreline erosion, property damage, displacement of families and delays in planting spring crops. . . . As researchers specializing in hydrology and climate science, we believe rapid transitions between extreme high and low water levels in the Great Lakes represent the "new normal." Our view is based on interactions between global climate variability and the components of the regional hydrological cycle. Increasing precipitation, the threat of recurring periods of high evaporation, and a combination of both routine and unusual climate events—such as extreme cold air outbursts—are putting the region in uncharted territory.

Floods once were landmark events in the histories of cities and towns and in the lives of the people who lived and worked there. Blizzards big enough to become part of the local folklore happened roughly once or twice a century, and historically destructive hurricanes only once or twice a decade. Extreme weather events had a place in the minds of local historians not very different from a Civil War battle or a memorable upset by the local high school football team. Now, though, there is no need to look back into antiquity for them. Extreme weather events happen every year. And each of them now runs into the next one. A severely rainy fall runs into a severely snowy winter, which melts into a severely rainy spring and, the next thing you know, the beach isn't there anymore and half the parking lot has fallen into the lake. The new normal is here, in Traverse City, as it is in thousands of other places, large and small.

The crisis is spinning rapidly beyond anyone's control. We are losing Louisiana by the yard, day after day. Hurricane and wildfire seasons begin sooner, are more ferocious, and last longer than they once did. The Alaskan barrier islands are being lost to oceans that do not freeze the way they once did. There is now an actual Northwest Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and Russia, China, Canada, and the United States are fighting over which country will get to drill for oil there first, which is like fighting over who gets to tie the knot in a suicidal hanging.

The Great Lakes are the heart of the continent's circulatory system. Without them, both American agriculture and American industry would have evolved in quite a different way. They contain 21 percent of the world's fresh water. They are in many senses inland seas. They are the basis of hundreds of legends dating back to antiquity. Each of them allegedly conceals a monster of one kind or another, including Mishipeshu, a sort of underwater panther that supposedly guards the Traverse City region's copper deposits and has been cited as the cause of shipwrecks and mysterious disappearances in and around the lakes. There are always reasons behind reasons. Some of them are mythical. Others are not.

On the night of the day that I walked through Clinch Park,

where the beach used to be, Hurricane Dorian, having flattened the Bahamas, was meandering up the southeast coast of the United States. At the same time, the president of the United States, Donald J. Trump, was engaged in an opéra bouffe concerning his assertion a few days earlier that the storm would hit Alabama. This was almost immediately gainsaid by the Birmingham office of the National Weather Service. The president thereupon produced an NWS map on which he himself had extended the storm's possible track to include Alabama through the use of a black Sharpie. Dorian continued to grind up the shoreline of the Carolinas while the president kept insisting that he had been right and that the NWS had been wrong.

That same night, CNN devoted seven hours to the climate crisis. Ten of the Democratic candidates for president were run through a town-hall format in which they discussed their approaches to what all of them agreed was an "existential threat" to human civilization. This is a remarkable platform on which to run for president. The only precedent I can find for it is Franklin Roosevelt's decision to run for a third term in 1940 because what he saw as an onrushing cataclysm demanded it. There were isolationists then, just as there are climate isolationists now, but Roosevelt told the Democratic National Convention: "The fact which dominates our world is the fact of armed aggression, the fact of successful armed aggression, aimed at the form of government, the kind of society, that we in the United States have chosen and established for ourselves. It is a fact which no one longer doubts, which no one is longer able to ignore."

At the CNN event, the candidates sounded similar alarms. Julián Castro said, "What you've described is the most existential threat to our country's future." Andrew Yang said, "There are already climate refugees in the United States of America, people that we relocated from an island that was essentially becoming uninhabitable in Louisiana. None of this is speculative anymore." Kamala Harris said, "I was part of a committee hearing during which the underlying premise of the hearing was to debate whether science should be the basis of public policy, this on a matter that is about an existential threat to who we are as human beings." And Joe Biden said, "We make up 15 percent of the problem. The rest of the world makes up 80 percent, 85 percent of the problem. If we did everything perfectly, everything, and we must and should in order to get other countries to move, we still have to get the rest of the world to come along. And the fact of the matter is, we have to up the ante considerably."

Bernie Sanders said, "The scientists have told us climate change is real, it is caused by human activity, it is already causing devastating problems in this country and around the world, and most fright-

eningly what they tell us is if we don't get our act together and make massive changes away from fossil fuel to energy efficiency and sustainable energy within the next eleven years, the damage done to our country and the rest of the world will be irreparable." Elizabeth Warren said, "How have we gotten ourselves into this mess? How has it gone this long when the climate science year after year after year has told us it's getting more and more dangerous out there, it's getting worse and worse for life on this earth?"

Pete Buttigieg said, "This is the hardest thing we will have done certainly in my lifetime as a country. This is on par with winning World War II, perhaps even more challenging than that." Beto O'Rourke said, "We can convene the ingenuity, the innovation of the private sector. We can lead from the public sector through those parameters and mandates that we set. We can perform to that, and we can lead the world on the greatest challenge that we've ever had." And Cory Booker said, "I've watched presidential campaigns [and never] have we ever had a forum like this discussing what it is for humanity, as has been said by every single candidate, the most existential crisis to our country and to the planet Earth."

It was a remarkable chorus of warnings and of determination, and it was completely appropriate to the crisis at hand. Unfortunately, it also was a campaign event in the presidential race of 2020. One of these people would have to run against an incumbent who forges weather maps to make himself look less ridiculous, and who once blamed the climate crisis on clever Chinese scientists, a president who brags about pulling the United States out of the Paris climate accord. And in the difference between that forum and this president lies an existential question just as profound as the one that the climate crisis poses to the world at large: Are the political system and institutions of the United States strong enough to confront the kind of challenge that the climate crisis presents? Can we work existential questions into what has become a spavined national political dialogue?

THE OCEANS DON'T CARE WHO WINS THE ELECTION. YOU CAN'T SPIN THEM.

On the day before the town hall, Politico, the Beltway's most successful tip sheet, ran a long story about how the climate crisis could cause problems for the Democrats in the upcoming election. It wedged the climate crisis into the procrustean context of both interparty and intraparty conflict. How far is too far? Is the vaunted Green New Deal too far? Is it the equivalent on the Democratic side of the climate denial championed by the White House and supported by the Republican party? The Politico piece was a judicious evaluation as far as it went, but it left out one important element:

The oceans don't care who wins the election. It doesn't matter to a hurricane whether a Democratic member of Congress representing a "red" district is troubled by what his constituents might see as extremist policies to meet the emergencies. You can't spin them. The parking lot will fall into the lake even if your plan polls well in Iowa, where the droughts will ruin the crops whether or not you carry Mahaska County.

What we have is a monumental election aimed at prying the government out of the hands of grifters and con men and profiteers. That would be hard enough all on its own. But it is being conducted with this enormous rolling catastrophe going on barely offstage. Just as it can be argued that this election may be a turning point in our commitment to republican self-government—as reelecting the current president would mean endorsing everything he's done to destroy the delicate checks and balances built into the system and, therefore, to admit to ourselves that we don't believe anymore not only in their ability to secure the promises of the Constitution but also in our capacity to govern ourselves at all—so it can be said that it also is a turning point in our commitment to a livable planet. We are running out of chances in both of these.

Washington governor Jay Inslee talked about all of this. Inslee ran for president specifically to address the climate crisis head-on. He since has dropped out, but his brief effort had a major effect on the race. Several of his erstwhile opponents, most notably Warren and Castro, took the time to discuss his ideas for confronting the crisis.

Several months earlier, he'd sat at a picnic table overlooking the Cedar River at a park outside Cedar Rapids and someone asked him if he thought that, in their present state, America's democratic institutions were capable of producing a response equal to the magnitude of a planetary crisis. At the time, Inslee was pushing hard for a debate among the Democratic candidates devoted entirely to the climate crisis. That debate never happened, but the movement for it produced the CNN town hall as well as a later one, hosted by MSNBC.

"When you have a threat to the very survival of the nation, and when the ability to surmount that threat requires massive new technology, significant changes in virtually everything we do, to expect the public to be able to distinguish between candidates based on sixty-second answers is just ludicrous," Inslee said.

"It's easy to hide in sixty seconds.... It's very difficult to see anything close to the meaningful progress that you need. If you get to the tipping point that I believe we're at, then these profound changes are possible. And I do believe in the theory that tipping points—it's happened on marriage equality, it's happened on marijuana.

"There are moments where you get a tectonic shift, and I believe we're close to that. There's the wave of urgency and the wave of promise. Both are spiking at the same time. The objective evidence [is] there's been a twelve-point rise in Americans who say we have to do something about it. That's significant. It's the number-one issue among Iowa primary voters now. Americans are coming to grasp it, and it's because of the visual imagery that they're seeing. They've seen it now on TV and in their neighborhood."

Every issue in this campaign is in some way about the climate crisis. It doesn't matter how good your health-care system is if epidemic disease runs rampant. Your immigration policy could be the most judicious and humane ever devised and it's still (continued on page 114)

WEST-WIND
BOK-EU
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BEST OF TEST
BEST OF TEST
WEST-WIND SCHOOLS
SHODAN
BEST OF TEST
WEST-WIND SCHOOLS
NIDAN
WEST-WIND SCHOOLS
SANDAN
WEST-WIND
2014
白虎
2016
白虎

ESCAPE

WHAT IS IT ABOUT A PERSON WHO, **IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY, SOARS WHERE OTHERS SINK?** HOW DOES ONE BREAK THE CYCLE OF TRAUMA THAT CLAIMED SO MANY WHO CAME BEFORE? NOVELIST **TOMMY ORANGE** ON THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF **JEFFREY MARTINEZ**, 17, OF THE SICANGU AND OGLALA LAKOTA FROM SOUTH DAKOTA, BORN AND RAISED IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI**

VELOCITY

ONE THING YOU should know about Jeffrey Martinez is that he understands and has cultivated and applies fortitude to his life. It's one of seven Lakota values his mother, Martha, instilled in him from a young age. The others are humility, respect, compassion, prayer, generosity, and wisdom, which Jeffrey can list off easily, because he really *knows* them.

Fortitude is one of those words I knew was important when I first learned it, but that took time to understand, to practice, to be made a quality. The word is defined as "courage in pain or adversity." This is one of the most beautiful definitions of a word not beautiful. I believe adversity can breed brilliance beyond what those with safe and comfortable lives are capable of. I'm not convinced that Jeffrey—Sicangu and Oglala Lakota from South Dakota, born and raised in Oakland, California—would be the excellent human being he is did he not know what happened to the men in his family. This is a truth he's had to live with: that all the men died.

I'VE KNOWN Jeffrey's family for more than a decade. I met Martha at the Native American Health Center in Oakland, where we both worked at the time. I first learned of Jeffrey's existence in a digital-storytelling workshop Martha and I took together. She made a short film about having adopted Jeffrey straight from the hospital. Jeffrey is her brother's son by birth. She adopted him because her brother died and his birth mother wasn't able to take care of him. His Lakota name is Hokšila ókiyapi, which translates to Helped Him Boy. The film I made was also about becoming a parent, and what it means to pass the weight of our stories, our histories, on to the next generation. Our families are close now. His mom is the godmother of my son.

Until recently, I wasn't particularly close to Jeffrey. I knew him as a quiet genius of Lego-and-cardboard art. He'd spend days, sometimes weeks, constructing Hogwarts Castle or a steam train or spaceships from *Star Wars*. A few years ago, he gave one of these massive and intricate homemade replicas to my son for his birthday. It still hangs in his room.

This July, I spent a few days getting to know Jeffrey better. We first met up at his home, just off Piedmont Avenue in North Oakland, where he lives with Martha and her mother, Geri, who's eighty-six. Their house is bright yellow, with an always-plentiful fig tree growing in the front yard. A couple blocks away, at St. Leo's Church, my mom's parents were married in 1943, and they are buried down the street, at Mountain View Cemetery. This part of Oakland used to make me think of my grandparents, of an Oakland they were a part of, which doesn't exist anymore, gone with the many memories we lost when their house burned down in the '91 Oakland fire. Now the area makes me think of Jeffrey, Martha, and Geri.

The day was sunny but not hot, and we spoke in the backyard, surrounded by sour grass and wildflowers. Laid out on the table between us, purring, was Luna, the family cat. "She likes it when people hang outside with her," Jeffrey said. Luna is thirteen and a big part of the family's life. When our families get together, we're sure to hear about Luna's latest hijinks, like the times—plural—she called Martha from their landline. One time, Luna rang as Jeffrey, Martha, and Geri were heading two and a half hours east to visit my family, in Angels Camp, California. Another time—and this is Jeffrey's favorite story about Luna's phone antics—she called Martha and left a voice-mail message. She meowed into the phone for seven minutes.

When I first knew Jeffrey, he was young and small and shy, but he's tall now, and seventeen. His face has a brilliant, unabashed sweetness when he's smiling, and an almost worried pensiveness when he's not. One of my first questions was about whether he's faced challenges growing up Native in Oakland. I instantly regretted my question, because I didn't like being asked the same thing. It felt like I was somehow being asked to authenticate my Native experience, and I feared Jeffrey would feel the same way. He didn't seem worried at all. "I feel like it's been easy for me," he said. "I feel like my mom has created an environment that allows me to freely express myself." This is both a true statement and Jeffrey being humble. I've known his family long enough to know

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there have certainly been struggles, but Martha really has done *everything* to make their lives true and considered and rooted in Lakota ways. When my wife and I have questions about parenting, Martha is the first (and only) person we call. She is the epitome of a model parent. When Jeffrey was little, he wanted long hair, and Martha allowed him to wear dish towels on his head, first around the house and then to school. "I had all these dress-up phases," he told me. "I'd go to preschool dressed like crazy." Jeffrey now has long black hair that I can't imagine he'll stop wearing long. It's not a stereotype to wear your hair long as a Native man; it's a cultural value, and he'll no more cut his value system than he will his hair. Martha brushes it for him all the time.

I don't always like to use the words *wise* and *wisdom,* because they've been overused to describe Native people. But Martha is wise, and this is not the same as being smart, which Martha is, too. Wisdom is as hard-earned as it is deceptively simple. It cuts to the heart of matters. Martha and Geri have that way about them, so Jeffrey was raised in a home rich with wisdom.

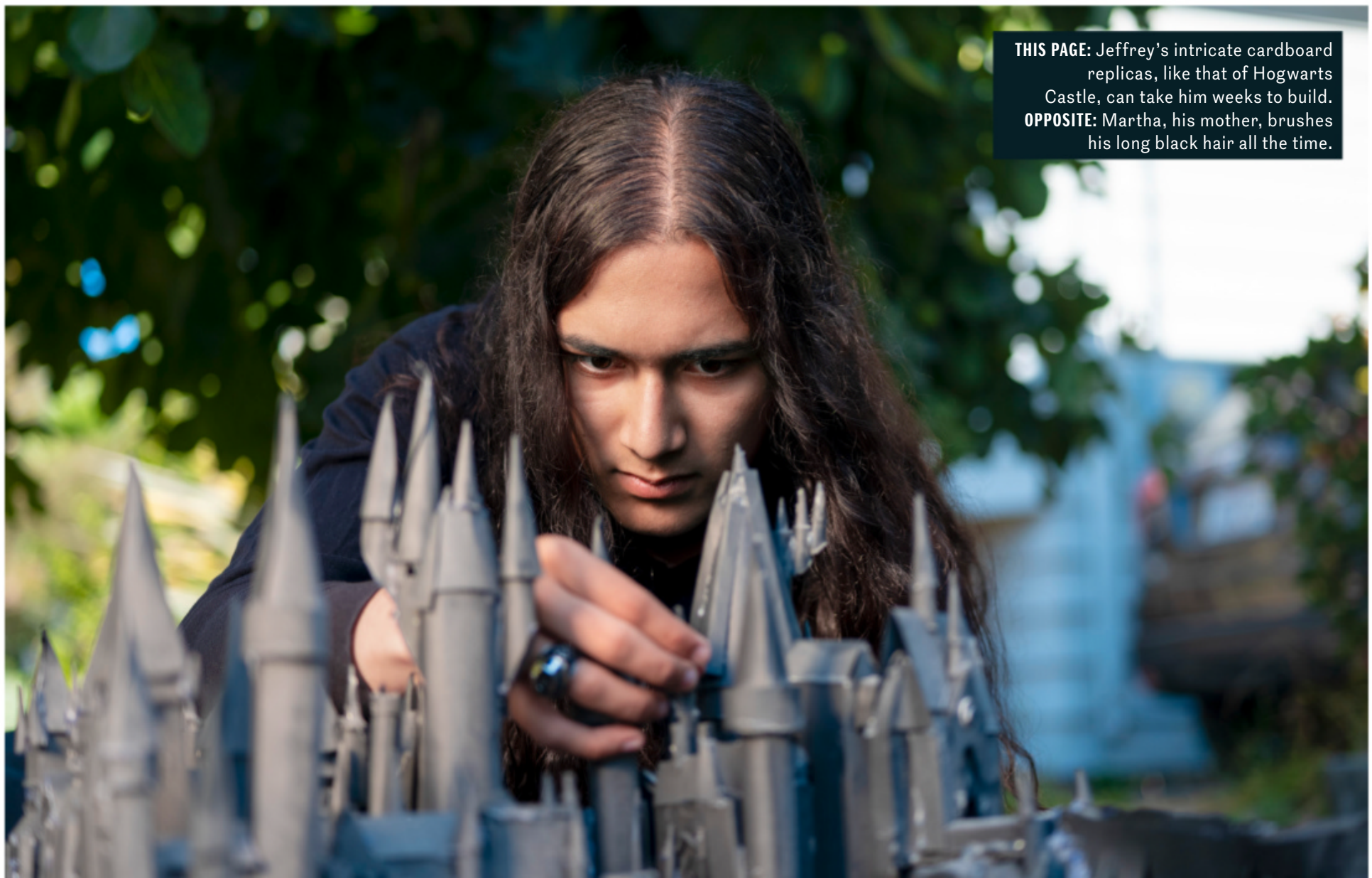
If wisdom is an overused and underrespected quality employed to describe Native people, I feel that there are other qualities we're not allowed to ascribe to ourselves, to our tribes, to our cultures. Words like *fortitude,* and *generosity.* We've been given *stoic* and *brave, drunk* and *dumb, wise* and *sage,* and anything referring to us being mystically connected to the earth. We find ourselves caught between the polar opposites of subhuman and superhuman. I've often been asked by non-Natives what makes me Native American, and how will I teach my son to be a Native American? I don't feel I can tell them how much generosity is a part of Cheyenne culture. A value I was taught as a Cheyenne value. It's not enough. They want something familiar, a popular depiction of Native Americans, not that a spirit of generosity is one of the things that make me Cheyenne. I knew from early on that if someone said something nice about something you owned, you gave it to them. Last year, while visiting my dad, I saw a very nice (and very expensive) Pendleton jacket in his closet. I told him I liked it, forgetting that this would result in him immediately giving it to me, which he did. I ended up taking my author photo in that jacket. I don't like that I can't avoid seeing that photograph a lot these days, but then I like it because it makes me remember my dad.

Jeffrey was wearing a faded black hoodie with an incomprehensible (to me) mathematical equation and the phrase ESCAPE VELOCITY. I asked what it means. "The speed at which you have to shoot something directly up, or at least perpendicular to the surface, in order to get it to escape the gravitational field of an object," he said. Like an orbit? "No, because orbit is described as you're falling towards an object, but you're going so fast that you always miss it." He helps me understand. "Say I was talking about you. If I shot you up at escape velocity, you'd escape Earth's gravitational field, which means you wouldn't fall back down." While he explained, I inadvertently looked up to the sky and imagined moving beyond the blue and into the black, getting very cold very fast and then dead.

There's more to the hoodie than a space joke. He wants to be an astrophysicist, but it's not just that, either. "My mom always talks about her father, and how he sort of spiraled down after they came from South Dakota to Oakland," he said. "It's happened to all the men in the family. My dad and all his brothers have passed away. There's this theme of the men falling out, mainly because of the historical trauma that has trickled down. Being able to overcome that mentally is very important. My mom always talks about breaking the chain, breaking that cycle, that downward trend." He understands the gravity of his situation, and he's still figuring out the speed he'll need to escape the field. He knows that to succeed will be the exception.

ANOTHER THING you should know about Jeffrey is that he is fierce. He is kind and gentle and sweet, right down to the way his voice sounds, but to see him in the dojo is to fear him. When he moves, his face is intense. There's no anger, just a ferocity and a precision of movement that you can tell comes from countless hours of practice.

The day after we talked in his backyard, I met up with Jeffrey at West Wind, the martial-arts school where he was training for the test to earn his third-degree black belt. He'd started taking lessons after an incident at space camp the summer before fifth grade, when another camper hit him. Martha decided she wanted her son to learn how to defend himself and enrolled him at West Wind. He took to it right away. With Jeffrey, that's no small thing. "When I dive into something, I usually go pretty deep," he told me. "I've always been naturally focused. My mom calls them 'phases.' I won't stop until I've learned as much as I pos-



THIS PAGE: Jeffrey's intricate cardboard replicas, like that of Hogwarts Castle, can take him weeks to build. **OPPOSITE:** Martha, his mother, brushes his long black hair all the time.

sibly can about it. I've been through a lot of phases, these intense periods of focus."

I was joined by a film crew from Germany that was shooting a segment about the release of the German translation of my novel, *There There*. I felt uncomfortable about how my new, strange life as an author was bleeding into my time with Jeffrey. The Germans wanted to film us together, and I would have said no, but Jeffrey loved the idea. He has no problem being in the spotlight. In it, he shines. The dojo has helped with that. "I'm a pretty shy person," he told me. "Like, when I'm introduced into a new environment, I can be quiet at first. My confidence levels were low in terms of public speaking and stuff like that. But karate has helped me a lot."

The crew set up outside the dojo; the director placed me, Jeffrey, and his teacher on the other side of the street. We joked about what we were supposed to be doing, about how to act naturally. The director signaled for us to cross, so we did, and we acted as if we were not acting, so acted natural and walked across the street to the dojo, where Jeffrey was to practice with weapons too big for the space in the dojo. We kept acting as if he were taking his lesson while he actually took his lesson. At one point, the director asked Jeffrey to slowly move toward the camera while spinning a three-section staff, a kind of giant nunchuck. The whole thing felt bizarre. Even mentioning it here, in this story, feels both unavoidable and something that absolutely should be avoided. It's just that I don't know what to do with what's happened to my life, and to include it feels as wrong as not to include it, so I'm aiming for somewhere in the middle, bringing it up and dismissing it at once by bringing up why I think it's dismissible. I'm not sure of the exact moment I felt I'd sufficiently made it out of the gravity my life had felt mired in for so long, at what point I attained the speed to stay afloat, even while continually falling, but it was somewhat recently. And it doesn't feel complete. I don't think it ever will. But I know I won't ever end up where I once was—doomed—where I maybe had to go to get where I am.

At one point, the director asked Jeffrey who I was to him. In his answer, he referenced *hunka,* a Lakota word that translates to "adopted family." He said I was a kind of uncle to him, or father figure. I hadn't known he felt that way.

AFTER THE FILM crew left, Jeffrey and I walked down the street to get ice cream at Fentons Creamery. I grew up going to Fentons, and so did my grandparents—that's how long the place has been a part of Oakland. When my mom was pregnant with me, she stopped eating sugar, and when I was born, my dad went to Fentons and got her favorite—a Black and Tan—and took it to the hospital. My sister used to be a waitress here, and I'd come all the time because she'd give me free meals. It's almost always crowded and loud. I don't have a favorite thing to get there, so when Jeffrey ordered a slice of apple pie and cookie-dough ice cream, I got the same.

We talked about school. Jeffrey is a senior at Lick-Wilmerding, one of the most prestigious high schools in San Francisco. Most families pay $49,000 each year to send their child, but Jeffrey qualified for its Flexible Tuition program. Getting in was an intense process, he said, "because I'm naturally very bad at standardized tests. The way they phrase things and the way that they expect you to answer it in one specific way, I call it 'conforming to the test,' and I'm really bad at conforming." His closest friends are Melinda, Caroline, and Ariana, and his group includes Julia, Brandon, Felix, Colette, and Jackie. He's the only Native American in the school. I asked if he's ever bothered by questions about Native culture. "When someone says, 'I have a Native American question for you,' I'm like, 'Oh, God, what are they going to say?'"

One time, his friend told him about a joke her mother made about how, at the school's annual social-justice workshop, the white affinity group could relocate the Native affinity group (which consisted of just Jeffrey). "I was like, 'That's not okay to say. My grandmother…' And I told her my grandma's story, how she moved to Oakland on relocation, and what she had to go through to get to where we are now. She came here with a ninth-grade education, and she raised eight kids, and she got a master's degree in social work while doing it. Getting to that level, becoming so good at what you do, is very inspiring. That's why I'm always bragging, like, 'My grandma did this!'"

A few days later, Jeffrey said, the friend sincerely apologized on behalf of herself and her mother. Still, "I feel this weight to sort of ad-

THIS PAGE: Jeffrey deals a hand of cards to his grandmother, Geri. **OPPOSITE:** Jeffrey, who loves trains, recently repaired the toy model from one of his favorite movies, *The Polar Express*, which he broke when he was five.

vocate for all Native Americans. I think other people sometimes stress that on me," he said. But "being aware of my grandma's story helps me get through hard situations."

We moved on to the universe. Jeffrey mentioned that Lakota people believe they come from the stars, and that scientists discovered that within their life span, stars create all the elements in the periodic table. "It's cool to start seeing all these parallels," he said. Talk turned to black holes. "Black holes have this thing called the event horizon. As light falls in, if it passes the event horizon, even light moving at the speed of light will not be able to be fast enough to escape the black hole. It swallows up the light." I can't say that I understood what he was talking about, or rather I was hearing something else, from some layer beneath Jeffrey's understanding of the cosmos, a metaphor about escape and light and darkness; about gravity and the speed we must reach to not fall in, just to stay afloat.

I asked Jeffrey what he thought about the idea of the American dream. Maybe it was the apple pie. "I think it's very much a dream," he said. "It's definitely not equal for everybody, for how much they have to work to get it. It's complicated." Nothing about being Native American is simple. Nor is there a Native American dream. Just dream catchers that hang from people's rearview mirrors, as if acknowledging there's something we need to see behind us. Jeffrey's understanding of his own life, its context, is astonishing to me. Sometimes there isn't much more to say than: It's complicated. When I was his age, I existed somewhere between obliviousness and oblivion. I don't remember having a single conversation with anyone about going to college. I wasn't even thinking then of what it might take to better myself, to achieve anything like a dream. Jeffrey and I have lived very different lives, but our shared sense of experience felt closer to me that afternoon in Fentons. Cookie-dough ice cream and apple pie are surprisingly good together, but neither of us finished.

THE NEXT DAY, Jeffrey and I headed to the train tracks near Jack London Square. Jeffrey loves trains. He has since he was very young. One of his favorite movies is *The Polar Express,* starring Oakland's very own Tom Hanks. He, Martha, and Geri watch it every Christmas. He likes the gears, and studying the moving parts. That's how he broke his toy *Polar Express* train when he was a boy, and how he fixed it. "It had the remote control that I'd turn all the way up, and I'd control the speed with my hand, which overheated the engine and it broke. I think the final straw was when my mom came home and the whole room was filled with smoke. She was like, 'You're gonna suffocate Grandma!' 'cause she was sitting in the living room, too. She was like, 'Turn it off.' And I was like, 'Fine.' It never turned back on. Recently, I took the bottom part off and removed a gear that locked it, then put it back together, so now it moves. And I was like, 'If only I knew how to do this when I was five!' "

The trains, and their blaring horns, lost their charm on me pretty fast, but Jeffrey kept saying things like "I like the vibrating" and "I could go to sleep to these sounds." So we talked for a while alongside the tracks, pausing to plug our ears each time a train passed.

We discussed college. Jeffrey wants to go to Caltech. This year, he's taking both honors calculus and honors statistics, because he researched which classes would be good to pursue astrophysics. Still, he's nervous to leave. "I have severe homesickness. And this recent full moon has, like, been bringing out my emotions," he told me. "And I've been like thinking about college, and having to go away from my friends and the people who have supported me throughout all these sort of hard transitions. And beginning that college-application process, and I think of having to move away and split paths. We'll still keep in touch, obviously, but there's still that physical-distance barrier. That sometimes scares me." At some point, the topic of his college-application essay came up. I wondered about his approach—how much he planned to write about overcoming hardship regarding his adoption, and to write about being Native American, what it means to him—knowing it could help him get in where he wants. He's aware of the commonly held belief that minorities get special consideration on college applications, and that the minority of

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STILL STRONG!

THIS PAGE: Jeffrey obtained his third-degree black belt in August. **OPPOSITE:** Jeffrey attends drum practice at Intertribal Friendship House, in Oakland.

minorities are Native people. His friends know it, too, and have joked about it with him. "Ever since freshman year, my friends have been saying, 'You're Native American, you can get into any school you want.' And I say, 'Oh, my God.'"

I asked him how to write about your experience and not feel you're exploiting yourself. He wasn't concerned about this fear. He would write about being Native with pride, and if it helped, good. Which is how it should be. There really is a lot to overcome being a Native person, which often reads to non-Native people as a kind of pity party you're throwing for yourself. It can seem impossible to acknowledge that some people have it harder than others, face more challenges, without prompting right-wing rhetoric about quotas and the wrongs of affirmative action; even if no such right-wingers are around to say it, it's in the American air we breathe—it's been said enough. And yet Jeffrey has a spirit of gratitude for all that he has; you can sense it at all times, such positivity as to seem naive, but it's not, it's a strength, something I never knew, especially not at his age. I would have envied him for it if I weren't so damn proud.

This is something I'm working to teach my son. Belief in oneself is both earned and learned. It's not that my parents weren't supportive. It's that they didn't know what they were passing on to me. As critical as I am of parents in my generation for our helicoptering, if nothing else we're aware of the risks of neglect, and how traits and flaws are unintentionally passed down. Martha taught me the right way by teaching her son, and Jeffrey taught me to believe it by being just exactly who he is.

IN AUGUST, I returned to Oakland to see Jeffrey take the test for his third-degree black belt. I stood at the back of West Wind, watching him in the wall mirrors. The teacher yelled out moves and maneuvers that Jeffrey and the other students had memorized, and they performed each one in unison. There were sounds of *gis* flapping and feet slapping on the mats and yells to mark finished moves. Jeffrey was clearly one of the best out there. I didn't worry about whether he'd pass. I wondered about what leaving home will do to him, and for him. I worry about his homesickness. I'm afraid for him, for his private struggles in the real world, and the condition of the world he's inheriting. This mess we've made. But then, knowing he'll be a part of it gives me hope.

Earlier in the summer, Jeffrey shared a story about visiting South Dakota. "I always love going back there," he said. "Because even though I wasn't raised there, I feel this strong connection to that land." He spoke lovingly of a time he and Martha and Geri had gone back for Sun Dance. "We were driving through this terrible storm. The rain was so thick that you couldn't see the centerline in front of you. And it was funny, because my grandma's a drama queen, and I think I inherited just a bit of that—I was carrying on in the backseat. My mom said, 'Just go to sleep. When you wake up, the storm will have passed.' And I was like, 'Okay, well, whatever happens, I just don't want to wake up in the spirit world.' And my mom started laughing. That just reminds me of going back home." Jeffrey knows home and what he loves about it, how grounded he is, with such strong women in his life. I thought of this story as I watched him make all the right moves that earned him his third-degree black belt.

For many teenagers, leaving home for college is an escape. For Jeffrey, it seems like a solemn duty. A way to break free from the gravity that held down the men who came before him, and a way to honor a mother and grandmother who always made sure he was taken care of, but not only that, made sure he stayed focused, that he worked hard, that he succeeded. Somehow the seven Lakota values applied to Jeffrey Martinez are an equation that equals escape, not from home but from a system made and not made for people like Jeffrey. The standard, the American mold, is definitively white, or at least it has been—see the majority of actors on TV and in movies, and politicians, and CEOs—and so to succeed, to fit the mold to the point of breaking it, this is what is necessary to become a leader now, to challenge the mold by doing more than what is expected of you. Jeffrey has his sights set high for good reason, because it's what he deserves, and wherever he ends up in this world, he will be a blessing.

Magnum Photos

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THIS PAGE:
Coat $5,495
sweater $1,695
and
trousers $925
by **Giorgio Armani.**
Boots $650
by **Belstaff.**

Teddy fur—a plush wool with the feel of fur—has warmth and attitude in equal measure.

OPPOSITE:
Coat $4,125
sweater $1,255
and
trousers $430
by **Corneliani.**

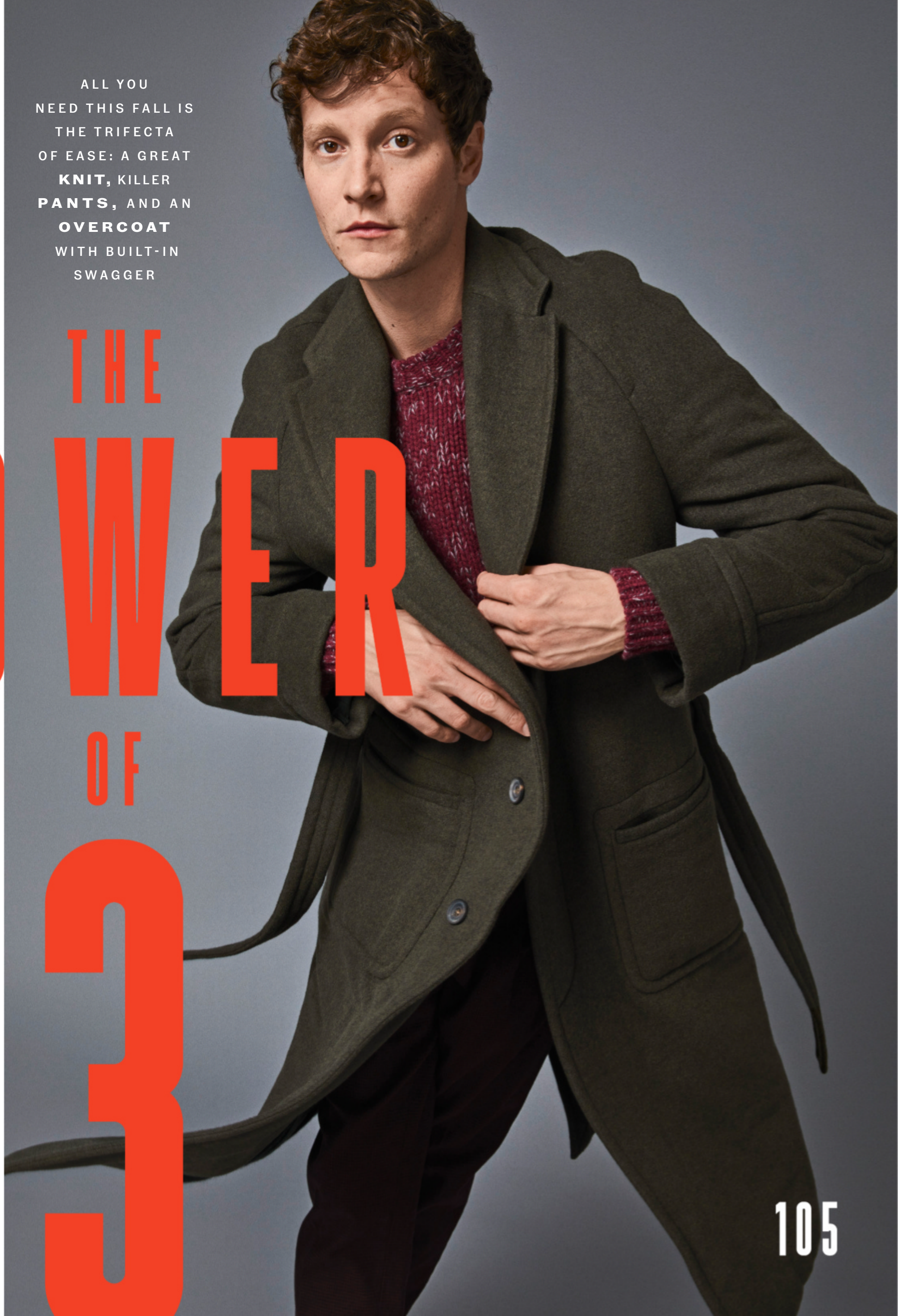
Belted and unstruc-tured coats like this one provide all the ease and comfort of a robe. Perfect for the morning coffee run, even over pajamas.

ALL YOU NEED THIS FALL IS THE TRIFECTA OF EASE: A GREAT **KNIT,** KILLER **PANTS,** AND AN **OVERCOAT** WITH BUILT-IN SWAGGER

THE POWER OF 3

Styling by **NICK SULLIVAN**

Photographs by **AARON RICHTER**



THIS PAGE:
Coat $1,950
sweater $675
and
trousers.....$475
by **Boglioli.**
Boots..... $675
by **Tod's.**

Casentino cloth has a deliberately pilled surface. In a three-quarter-length coat, that vintage feel softens up even the dressiest combos.

OPPOSITE:
Coat $5,645
sweater..... $1,725
and
trousers..... $875
by **Brunello Cucinelli.**

Consider corduroy. It's an unusual cloth for a coat but has a ton of easy style. Just don't wear it over corduroy.

THIS PAGE:
Coat
by **Bottega Veneta.**
Sweater $498
by **Michael Kors.**
Trousers $340
by **Sandro.**

The default setting for a tasteful winter coat is black melton, a dense cloth that works with everything.

OPPOSITE:
Coat
by **Z Zegna.**
Sweater $1,195
by **Ermenegildo Zegna.**
Trousers $60
by **Levi's.**

A coat should have a personality all its own. It doesn't have to match what you put under it.

THIS PAGE:
Coat
by **Salvatore Ferragamo.**
Sweater $900
by **Boglioli.**
Trousers $245
by **Sunspel.**

The raglan sleeve has an unstructured shoulder—without a restricting sleeve head—which makes it easier to get on and move in.

OPPOSITE:
Coat $3,650
and
trousers.....$450
by **Canali.**
Sweater $795
by **Paul Stuart.**
Boots $180
by **Timberland.**

***Bouclé* is a French word for a cloth made from a crinkly yarn that can be woven into a crunchy, heavily textured granular surface that's as casual as it is elegant.**

For store information see page 115. Grooming by Enrico Mariotti for the Land of Barbers.

WILD MAN

(continued from page 70)

into the story now from the front seat of the Suburban. "So I call the *Stargate* office, and the badass producer is there, and he's like, 'Jason, get in the fucking car, get to the fucking airport!' So there's one seat left on the fucking back of the plane . . . and I tell the lady, 'Listen, I'm having a baby—make sure everyone sits down so I can get off the plane first.' "

At this point, Momoa is out of the car, acting out the scene on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant. "So I come barreling out of the terminal, like the Predator, like, 'GET OUT OF THE WAY!' " As he says this last bit, he booms his voice out of his chest with such a rumbling baritone that it scares some children walking past. He pauses at the Parlour's host stand to stick his nose into a big bouquet of flowers ("I'm Hawaiian, I can't help it"), then launches back into the story.

"I'm running through the airport, and I get in the car. I go, like, 'Dude, I don't care, run all the lights . . . I'll pay for everything.' And I made it in the nick of time. I had about two hours with her in the tub, and my baby girl was born. Oh, and this is the best part! Benjamin Bratt was on the plane! He was in first class. And when I ran past him, I'm like, *Oh, shit, Benjamin Bratt!* And he was like, 'Go, go, go.' "

Benjamin Bratt is an actor perhaps best known for playing a detective on *Law & Order.* Not galactically famous, but Momoa was starstruck—and he still seems to be. As I learned throughout the day, he speaks reverentially about nearly every actor who is not himself. He almost has something of a complex about it. Several times during our conversation, he referred to himself as "more of a stuntman" than an actor.

Perhaps that's because he fell backward into the profession. His first-ever role was on *Baywatch Hawaii,* which he auditioned for on a whim when he was twenty, beating out a thousand other candidates for the part. Momoa's life until then had been full of wanderlust: born in Hawaii; grew up in Iowa after his parents divorced when he was an infant; lived for a while in Colorado, where he logged some time as a snowboard bum; moved back to Hawaii, where he worked at a surf shop and helped "tow in the big waves" for his father's family, a bona fide local surf dynasty.

Playing a smoldering, coconut-oil-coated lifeguard lit a spark, Momoa says, but it went unrequited. "I fell in love with the art of acting. But no one took me seriously. *Baywatch* isn't known for its . . . quality of acting. I couldn't get an agent to save my life." So he moved to Los Angeles, in the most Momoa-esque of ways: He bought an Airstream, let his long hair thicken into dreadlocks, and wandered some more—"I did the whole vagabonding around," as he puts in. In California, he lived in a trailer and worked as a bouncer until he got a part in a Lifetime movie, which led to four years of delivering lines about interplanetary lasers on *Stargate.* It was a winding path, with several pockets of self-doubt. But his willingness to take opportunities as they came eventually paid off, and not just with his career. "If someone says something isn't possible," Momoa says, "I'm like, 'Listen here, I married Lisa Bonet. Anything is fucking possible.' "

AT THE PIZZA PLACE, which is busy with a well-heeled happy-hour crowd, Momoa leads the group to a private room in the back that features low lighting, caramel leather banquette seating, and its own mezcal bar. The space has started to fill up with the *See* crew: hairstylists, costume designers, Momoa's stunt double, Momoa's sword-fighting coach.

Even as he orders a round of drinks for everyone in his line of vision, all these people who have their jobs because he agreed to star on a series, he continues to be hard on himself. "I'm not known for my acting," he says. "I'm known for action. I don't say a lot of things or use big sentences." And then, adding air quotes, he says, "I'm not 'very smart.' "

At first, I take his modesty as a kind of aw-shucks bit. Sure, he's known his share of flops—see: the 2011 remake of *Conan the Barbarian*—and he spent most of his twenties hustling his way into unremarkable roles, but his star has been on an inexorable rise ever since he landed, at thirty-one, a major part on the biggest prestige show of its generation. Then again, by his own admission, his role on *Game of Thrones*—Khal Drogo—didn't exactly showcase the actor's full range. "I mean, where do you put Drogo? He's not going in a rom-com. No one even knew I spoke English."

This constant self-abasement almost makes me want to hug him, especially once I remember something he said earlier that day, on his patio: "I think of Brad Pitt as a movie star. You know what I mean? Like George Clooney is a movie star. Those guys are like, *boom*." He just worked with Timothée Chalamet on Denis Villeneuve's *Dune,* coming out in December 2020. "I would never be able to handle what he does," Momoa said, reflecting on how his career had a slower burn. "He's so fucking talented, man. I don't know. I'm a little dumber, needed some time. Which is probably the best for me, because it would have been bad if it happened when I was younger. I just would have fucked it all up."

MOMOA DIDN'T BECOME famous until his thirties, and he often appears to be making up for lost time. He always seems to have his hands in something on the side, cooking up a little extra business, milking whatever opportunities he can. He *loves* to trademark things. (Remember that Aloha J clothing line?) He is manically entrepreneurial; he seems to start a company every other week. At the moment, the list of products he is making or investing in includes but is not limited to: nylon surf pants, pink rock-climbing shoes, rock-climbing chalk bags, oversize camping backpacks, handcrafted knives, fine leather bags made from old mule straps, and reusable water bottles. While we were sitting on the deck during our interview, he ran inside to his room to grab two different bag prototypes he is developing. He plopped them at my feet like an eager door-to-door salesman. "It can become a tote or for water sports or surfing," he tells me, showing off the expandable pink bag. "Just put shit in there and just throw it over your back."

Momoa actively takes an "all boats rise" approach to celebrity, at least for the men in his life. If he's winning, then so are his friends. Take Mada Abdelhamid, his current right-hand man (aka his travel companion/tech support/new dogsitter). The two met when Abdelhamid, who is bald and Egyptian and jacked and even taller than Momoa, became his personal trainer. After the former professional wrestler got Momoa's abs in rippling shape for *Aquaman,* he just sort of . . . stayed on, indefinitely, maybe forever. This tends to happen around Momoa; he collects people and puts them on the payroll. "My original trainer, before Mada, is now one of my producing partners," he says. "Everyone just kind of moves up." Momoa is squeezing as much out of stardom as he can, inviting everybody he likes to pull up to the feast.

It dawns on me that on the HBO show *Entourage,* a movie star surrounds himself with a gang of yes-men as he prepares to play Aquaman, and now the real-life star of *Aquaman* constantly hangs with a bevy of dudes who high-five him and keep his fridge stocked with ice-cold beer. When I bring up the parallels, Abdelhamid says that they laugh about this all the time. But unlike *Entourage*'s Vince, who was a toxic bachelor, Momoa often takes his children on the road, and he invites all his friends to do the same. The gang, Abdelhamid estimates, can sometimes swell to thirty.

Momoa wants his kids to have a lot of access to his life, to understand what their father does all day. "They got raised on the *Justice League* set," he says. "Running around

with the Batmobile . . . wearing the tiara from *Wonder Woman*." But he also wants Wolf and Lola to develop a respect for the world outside the sparkly arena of a film set, so he has been teaching them how to openly agitate against climate change and to fight for environmental protections. Earlier this year, he and his children stood with the indigenous people of the Big Island as part of a peaceful protest against the building of a new telescope on top of Mauna Kea, a volcano that many Polynesians consider to be a sacred site. Momoa highlighted the cause on Instagram, which led several of his friends, including the Rock, to add their voices to the effort.

Of all of Momoa's side hustles, his environmental activism may be the most noble, and also the most sincere. When he was young, he tells me, what he really wanted to be was a marine biologist. Over two spring breaks in high school, he traveled from Iowa to Florida to study the dying coral reefs. He says that as a Hawaiian who visited the islands a lot as a child, he has an inherent understanding of the devastation humans are wreaking on the planet. "Everyone just has no idea what you get to see firsthand when you live on an island," he says. "All the shit and garbage that rolls up. The rising of the tides."

Lately, Momoa's most ardent cause has been eliminating plastic waste. He has seen too much marine life choking on old bottle caps, and he aims to do his part to stop it. This year, he's launching a line of canned water called Mananalu that he hopes will raise awareness about the amount of plastic in the oceans. If there's one thing Momoa really hates, it's disposable water bottles. I saw his contempt up close, when we were standing outside the Parlour. He crouched down to pick up a discarded water bottle from the curb, crushed it in his hands like a bug, and chucked it into the trash can in disgust. "This fucking thing," he mumbled.

One of the reasons he was so excited to play Aquaman, he tells me, is that the character is the rare superhero who fights for the oceans. He was so enraptured by the idea, he says, that he signed on to appear in multiple films without realizing how long he would be locked into playing the eco-warrior. "I signed that, what, five years ago? And they're like, 'You're not doing anything? We're going to make you sign a four-picture deal,' " he sighs. "Like, you're going to do all of those and they *get* you. You know what I mean?"

Next year, when Momoa starts filming the *Aquaman* sequel, he will be able to bring even more of his ideas to the role. He'll be working more actively with the creative team in the development of the project. "I came in with a big pitch," he says. "I came in with the whole thing mapped out, and they *loved* it."

Though he's busier than ever—he's booked solid with jobs through 2022—he still tries to make time for the hobbies he had before he was a big name. He's been rock climbing since he was fourteen and says it's the one activity that truly centers him. It's also how he keeps his superhero physique. He installed a rock-climbing wall in his house, and he is teaching Lola and Wolf to belay. One of the first times he hung out with his stepdaughter, Zoë Kravitz, Bonet's daughter with the rock musician Lenny Kravitz, he took her and Bonet climbing. She was a teenager at the time. He figured it would be a nice metaphor; he wanted to show her that he wasn't going anywhere, that he would be there for her at the end of her rope.

At forty, Momoa is really pushing himself, adding as many hyphenates to his name as possible. He's trying to do *all* the things: end plastic pollution and prove his acting chops and protest mega-telescopes and hire all his friends and be a good dad and a good husband and an action star and a filmmaker and an entrepreneur and a rock climber and a conscientious citizen of the earth. So he laughs at poop and has a man cave full of leather and rare guitars and custom-made knives and Edison bulbs and heavy-metal records. So he drinks a few pints of beer and starts bear-hugging everyone at the bar, a Falstaffian party boy dominating the room. So he stocks his house with "toys," including several motorcycles, seven Airstreams, and a pink 1955 Cadillac. He's fully, giddily enjoying the perks of being Jason Momoa, and he's doing it *right now,* because he knows what it feels like to be on a hot streak after several years out in the cold. So he *borrowed* an adorable dog from a set and let him sleep next to him under the covers, but just *temporarily.* (That is, until he speaks to his wife.) And really, wouldn't you, given the chance, do the same?

AT THE WRAP PARTY, after two more beers, Momoa moves on to whiskey, and he offers a refill to anyone in need. He doesn't seem to be feeling the effects of the Guinness from the afternoon, but as the night wears on, he does appear to be in an increasingly jolly mood. He is the center of this party's solar system, and as the other guests orbit him, his smile radiates like a sunbeam.

At one point, he asks me to stand up so we can compare heights—he has a full foot and a half on me, which he finds hilarious. He rests his elbow on the crown of my head for effect. I meet his regular stunt double, Kim Fardy, who looks like a lumberjack in a plaid flannel shirt. As we're talking, Momoa leans over and says to me, "Tell him he's a fucking asshole," and then, in the same breath, "No, tell him he's the godfather of my children." It's unclear if either statement is true. As I leave the party, I see Momoa sling his arm lovingly around Fardy. I can't tell if he's going in for a warm embrace or angling for a noogie.

THE CARPETBAGGING GAMBLERS OF THE GARDEN STATE

(continued from page 77)

fantasy-football league. Legalized marijuana hasn't led to a pothead epidemic, and sports betting is unlikely to ensnare the innocent masses. Those who bet before will keep betting; it's just that now their wagers will be regulated by the government.

And just as marijuana legalization has harshed the mellow of many a weed dealer, it's the bookies who face extinction. Dirk, a thirty-something who lives on the Upper East Side and works in finance, has been an agent of this particular change. A longtime gambler, he's stopped placing bets with local bookies. "The bookies miss me a little bit," he admits. For now, he's limited only by geography: "If I lived in New Jersey, I'd bet every day."

For mobile sports betting to grow, the industry can't simply rely on the old guard; it must recruit new users. "Anytime you're taking an underground market and moving it into a legal and regulated one," FanDuel's chief marketing man, Mike Raffensperger, later explains, "it's an interesting period of transition." If the stigma persists, it's time for a rebrand. "We don't just think of ourselves as a gambling company," he says. "We think of ourselves as a sports-technology entertainment company."

DraftKings has laid claim to Hoboken Terminal, if its advertisements on every surface of the station are any indication. "I think I like the idea that I'm not breaking the law," says Bobby, twenty-nine, from the West Village, who's sitting on a bench with his dog curled at his feet. It's his first time betting with a New Jersey sports book; he's using FanDuel, in spite of the ads. (The company received seven times as many bets in New Jersey during this year's NFL opening week as it did during last year's.) "I didn't know what to do with my day, and I was just waiting for the afternoon football games to get going," Bobby tells me. "I didn't even know how I would feel spending an hour coming here, betting, and coming back, if I would feel like it was a waste of time." He pauses to bet fifty dollars on the Kansas City Chiefs, then flashes a sheepish grin. "If I had more important things to do, I wouldn't be doing this."

THE FIRST ELECTION AT THE END OF THE WORLD

(continued from page 95)

going to be overwhelmed when islands sink and entire swaths of Asia and Africa become incapable of sustaining agriculture and are rendered uninhabitable. In 1864, the United States did something remarkable: It conducted a presidential election in the middle of a Civil War. This election is similar to that, but different, too. That could have been the last election held in the United States of America. This could be the first election held at the end of the world.

As far as anyone can tell, the cherry was first cultivated in the West in an area of the Roman Empire called Anatolia, now Turkey. It is thought to have arrived there from China, where cherries had been grown since around 4000 B.C. (The name is derived from Cerasus, a town in Turkey.) They were brought to Rome in the first century B.C. by a soldier-politician with the tongue-twisting name of Lucius Lucinius Lucullus. (*Lucullan,* a word used to describe luxurious dining, is derived from his name.) The cherry spread through northern Europe, especially France and Belgium, whence Henry VIII, as Lucullan a king as ever there was, planted an orchard of them in England in 1533. They crossed over into the New World with the French explorers and colonists who rode the St. Lawrence River into the Great Lakes area, settling in and around what is now Detroit.

In 1839, a Presbyterian missionary named Peter Dougherty went north from Detroit to convert the Ottawa and Chippewa who lived around Grand Traverse Bay. Dougherty brought with him cherry plants, the story goes, to start an orchard on what is now called Old Mission Peninsula. The local Native people told him not to bother, but Dougherty was determined. (Legend has it that the Chippewa dubbed him "Little Beaver" because of his determination as a farmer.) The soil and the climate, it turned out, were perfect for the cultivation of cherries, and now the area in and around Traverse City is probably the cherry capital of the world. The National Cherry Festival is held there every July. (It began, in 1925, as a ceremony called the "Blessing of the Blossoms.") The area produces somewhere around 75 percent of the country's tart cherries and 20 percent of its sweet cherries. And the industry is in very deep trouble.

The cherry farmers in Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties are being hit from all sides. Trade agreements have allowed Turkish cherries to flood the market. Fruit flies have become an overwhelming problem. (This year, the peak population for the flies occurred just as harvest season began.) In August, a fourth-generation farmer from Old Mission Peninsula named Raymond Fouch and his son posted a photo on Facebook that showed nine tons of tart cherries that had to be dumped on the ground because local processing plants had told him they didn't need any more. And then there's the weather. Or, more precisely, the climate.

Once ideal for the cultivation of cherries, the climate in the area has become completely unpredictable over the past decade. In 2012, a warm spell in March caused the trees to bud five weeks early, only to have the buds die when a bizarre cold snap lasted almost the entire month of April. One farm that produced ten million to fifteen million pounds of cherries annually saw its production drop to 100,000. This had happened before, in 2002. The farmers saw two once-in-a-lifetime weather events in a little more than a decade.

And these were not outliers, either. In 2012, Michigan state climatologist Jeff Andresen told PBS, "We know from our climate records that our seasonal warm-up is beginning an average of a week and a half earlier than it did just thirty years ago. We also have very, very strong evidence that the number of freeze events following the beginning of development for these tree-fruit crops has increased. So there's a longer time frame where that crop is vulnerable to those spring freezes than used to be the case thirty, forty, fifty years ago."

This year, the cherry farmers, and all of the fruit farmers in northern Michigan, found their crops struck by a killer fungus that had everything to do with how rainy the spring was, and this was after how snowy the winter was, and how rainy the fall had been before that. A warmer earth is a wetter earth, and as Michigan officials pointed out to Interlochen Public Radio, the state now gets three or four more inches of rain on average than it did fifty years ago.

This is the insidious thing about the climate crisis. It is central to every other issue but, often, you have to look past the obvious to find its effects. The cherry farmers of northern Michigan are beset by foreign competition and by fruit flies, but they also know that what was once the perfect climate for growing their crops is changing, inexorably, and that it doesn't matter if Turkish cherries overwhelm the market if you can't grow cherries yourself anymore.

"Oh, come on. Give me a break."

This was the answer Senator Elizabeth Warren gave to moderator Chris Cuomo at the CNN climate town hall when he asked her the following question.

"The president announced plans to roll back energy-saving lightbulbs, and he wants to reintroduce four different kinds, which I'm not going to burden you with, but one of them is the candle-shaped ones, and those are a favorite for a lot of people, by the way. But do you think that the government should be in the business of telling you what kind of lightbulb you can have?"

Warren gave him the answer that question deserved. She went on to say, "Look, there are a lot of ways that we try to change our energy consumption, and our pollution, and God bless all of those ways.... But understand, this is exactly what the fossil-fuel industry hopes we're all talking about. That's what they want us to talk about. 'This is your problem.' They want to be able to stir up a lot of controversy around your lightbulbs, around your straws, and around your cheeseburgers.

"When 70 percent of the pollution, of the carbon that we're throwing into the air, comes from three industries, and we can set our targets and say, by 2028, 2030, and 2035, no more... the point is, that's where we need to focus. And why don't we focus there? It's corruption. It's these giant corporations that keep hiring the PR firms that—everybody has fun with it, right, gets it all out there—so we don't look at who's still making the big bucks off polluting our earth. And the time for that has passed. We have a chance left, in 2020, to turn this around, but we are running out of time on this one."

There was a lot going on in that exchange. If Cuomo's framing of the question prevails, there is no hope of mustering the political will to face the true magnitude of what's going on around the world. There will have to be sacrifices, and the longer we delay seriously confronting the problem, the harsher those sacrifices are going to have to be. And discussing the crisis in the stunted juvenilia of our current political dialogue and trusting its solution to something emerging from the cheap context of our current political moment is something akin to the cherry farmers of Leelanau County trusting to the intervention of Mishipeshu, the underwater panther, to save their crops.

The truth is that the rain in northern Michigan doesn't care if we do nothing, or laugh off the warnings, or mock those truly concerned, or laugh about paper straws while entire island nations slip under the waves forever. Nor do the killing frosts and the voracious fungi and the swarming fruit flies. They are the consequences of the issue that, for whatever reason, our politics and our political institutions and our people find so difficult to confront fully in the dwindling time we have left. That is where we are, in 2019, one year out from the first election at the end of the world.

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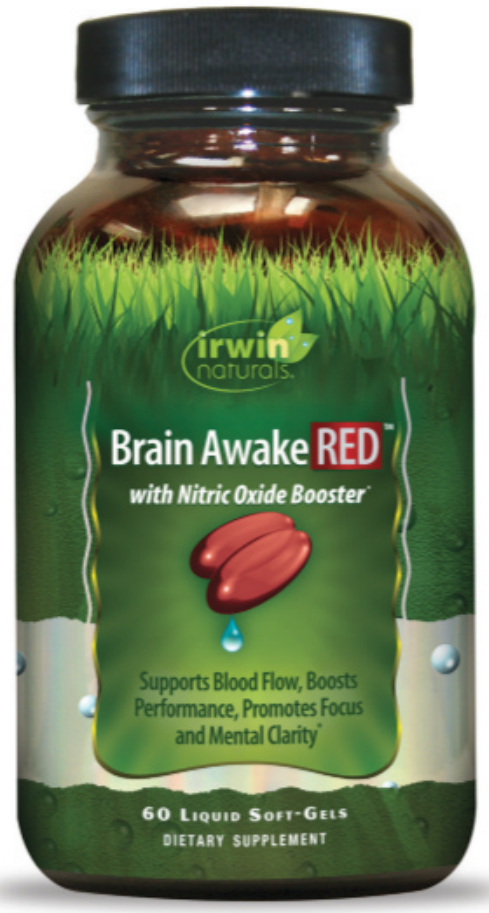
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CERVANTES Ramirez

Mixologist and painter, 43

"Wearing a hat is like wearing a Band-Aid on your nose. People don't look at your face—they look at the Band-Aid. When you take it away, they can't recognize you. Some people don't recognize me without a hat."

THE TAKEAWAY
If you're going for an all-dark look, you don't need to stick to black-on-black. In fact, layering in navy, hunter, or gray is a great way to add depth and subtlety to an outfit (implying depth and subtlety in the wearer, of course).

Jacket by **Unis;** trousers by **Topman;** T-shirt by **Save Khaki United;** glasses by **Cutler and Gross;** hat by **Westerlind;** jewelry by **Mara Carrizo Scalise.**

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